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PARADISE  
REGAIN'D.

A  
POEM.

In IV BOOKS.

To which is added

SAMSON AGONISTES.

The Author

JOHN MILTON.

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PARADISE REGAIN'D,  
**A POEM.**

*The First BOOK.*

**I** Who e're while the happy Garden sung,  
 By one mans disobedience lost, now sing  
 Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,  
 By one mans firm obedience fully tri'd  
 Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd  
 In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,  
 And *Eden* rais'd in the vast Wilderness.  
 Thou Spirit who ledst this glorious Eremit  
 Into the Desert, his Victorious Field  
 Against the Spiritual Foe, and brought'st him thence  
 By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,  
 As thou art wont, my prompted Song else mute,  
 And bear through highth or depth of natures bounds

A 3

With



With prosperous wing full summ'd to tell of deeds  
Above Heroic, though in secret done,  
And unrecorded left through many an Age,  
Worthy t' have not remain'd so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclaimer with a voice  
More awfull than the sound of Trumpet, cri'd  
20 Repentance, and Heavens Kingdom nigh at hand  
To all Baptiz'd: to his great Baptism flock'd  
With aw the Regions round, and with them came  
From *Nazareth* the Son of *Joseph* deem'd  
To the flood *Jordan*, came as then obscure,  
Unmarkt, unknown; but him the Baptist soon  
Descri'd, divinely warn'd, and witness bore  
As to his worthier, and would have resign'd  
To him his Heavenly Office, nor was long  
His witness unconfirm'd: on him baptiz'd  
30 Heaven open'd, and in likeness of a Dove  
The Spirit descended; while the Fathers voice  
From Heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.  
That heard the Adversary, who roving still  
About the world, at that assembly fam'd  
Would not be last, and with the voice divine  
Nigh Thunder-struck, th' exalted man, to whom  
Such high attest was giv'n, a while survey'd  
With wonder, then with envy, fraught and rage  
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air  
40 To Councel summons all his mighty Peers,  
Within thick Clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,  
A gloomy Consistory; and them amidst  
With looks agast and sad he thus bespake.

O ancient Powers of Air and this wide world,  
For much more willingly I mention Air,  
This our old Conquest, than remember Hell

Our hated habitation; well ye know  
How many Ages, as the years of men,  
This Universe we have possesst, and rul'd  
50 In manner at our will th' affairs of Earth,  
Since *Adam* and his facil consort *Eve*  
Lost Paradise deceiv'd by me, though since  
With dread attending when that fatal wound  
Shall be inflicted by the Seed of *Eve*  
Upon my head, long the decrees of Heav'n  
Delay, for longest time to him is short;  
And now too soon for us the circling hours  
This dreaded time have compast, wherein we  
Must bide the stroak of that long threatn'd wound,  
60 At least if so we can, and by the head  
Broken be not intended all our power  
To be infring'd, our freedom and our being.  
In this fair Empire won of Earth and Air;  
For this ill news I bring, the Womans seed  
Destin'd to this, is late of Woman born,  
His Birth to our just fear gave no small cause,  
But his growth now to youths full flowr, displaying  
All vertue grace and wisdom to achieve  
Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.  
70 Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim  
His coming, is sent Harbinger, who all  
Invites, and in the Consecrated stream  
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so  
Purified to receive him pure, or rather  
To do him honour as their King; all come,  
And he himself among them was Baptiz'd,  
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive  
The Testimony of Heaven, that who he is  
Thenceforth the Nations may not doubt; I saw



80 The Prophet do him reverence, on him rising  
 Out of the Water, Heav'n above the Clouds  
 Unfold her Crystal Doors, thence on his head  
 A perfect Dove descend, what e're it meant,  
 And out of Heav'n the Sov'raign voice I hear  
 'This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd.  
 His Mother then is mortal, but his Sire,  
 He who obtains the Monarchy of Heav'n,  
 And what will he not do to advance his Son?  
 His first-begot we know, and fore have felt,  
 90 When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep;  
 Who this is we must learn, for man he seems  
 In all his lineaments, though in his face  
 The glimpses of his Fathers glory shine,  
 Ye see our danger on the utmost edge  
 Of hazard, which admits no long debate,  
 But must with something sudden be oppos'd,  
 Not force, but well couch'd fraud, well woven snares,  
 E're in the head of Nations he appear  
 Their King, their Leader, and Supream on Earth.  
 100 I, when no other durst, sole undertook  
 The dismal expedition to find out  
 And ruine *Adam*, and the exploit perform'd  
 Successfully; a calmer Voyage now  
 Will wait me; and the way found prosp'rous once  
 Induces best to hope of like success.  
 He ended, and his words impression left  
 Of much amazement to th' infernal Crew,  
 Distracted and surpriz'd with deep dismay  
 At these sad tidings; but no time was then  
 110 For long indulgence to their fears or grief:  
 Unanimous they all commit the care  
 And management of this main enterprize

To

To him their great Dictator, whose attempt  
 At first against mankind so well had thriv'd  
 In *Adam's* overthrow, and led their march  
 From Hell's deep-vaulted Den to dwell in light,  
 Regents and Potentates, and Kings, yea gods  
 Of many a pleasant Realm and Province wide.  
 So to the Coast of *Jordan* he directs  
 120 His easie steps; girded with snaky wiles,  
 Where he might likeliest find this new-declar'd,  
 This Man of men, attested Son of God,  
 Temptation and all guile on him to try;  
 So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd  
 To end his Reign on Earth so long enjoy'd:  
 But contrary unweeting he fulfill'd  
 The purpos'd Counsel pre-ordain'd and fixt  
 Of the most High, who in full frequency bright  
 Of Angels, thus to *Gabriel* smiling spake.  
 130 *Gabriel* this day by proof thou shalt behold,  
 Thou and all Angels conversant on Earth  
 With man or mens affairs, how I begin  
 To verifie that solema message late,  
 On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure  
 In *Galilee*, that she should bear a Son  
 Great in Renown, and call'd the Son of God;  
 Then toldst her doubting how these things could be  
 To her a Virgin, that on her should come  
 The Holy Ghost, and the power of the highest  
 140 O're-shadow her: this man born and now up-grown,  
 To shew him worthy of his birth Divine  
 And high prediction, henceforth I expose  
 To Satan; let him tempt and now assay  
 His utmost subtilty because he boasts  
 And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng

Of



10 *Paradise Regain'd.*

Of his Apostasie; he might have learnt  
 Less overweening, since he fail'd in *Job*,  
 Whose constant perseverance overcame  
 What e're his cruel malice could invent.  
 150 He now shall know I can produce a man  
 Of female Seed, far abler to resist  
 All his sollicitations, and at length  
 All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell,  
 Winning by Conquest what the first man lost  
 By fallacy surpriz'd. But first I mean  
 To exercise him in the Wilderness,  
 There he shall first lay down the rudiments  
 Of his great warfare, e're I send him forth  
 To conquer Sin and Death the two grand foes,  
 160 By Humiliation and strong Sufferance:  
 His weakness shall o'recome Satanic strength  
 And all the world, and mass of sinfull flesh;  
 That all the Angels and Ætherial Powers,  
 They now, and men hereafter may discern,  
 From what consummate vertue I have chose  
 This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,  
 To earn Salvation for the Sons of men.  
 So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven  
 Admiring stood a space, then into Hymns  
 170 Burst forth, and in Celestial measures mov'd,  
 Circling the Throne and Singing, while the hand  
 Sung with the voice, and this the argument.  
 Victory and Triumph to the Son of God  
 Now entering his great duel, not of arms,  
 But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles.  
 The Father knows the Son; therefore secure  
 Ventures his filial Vertue, though untri'd,  
 Against what e're may tempt, what e're seduce,  
 Allure,

*Paradise Regain'd.*

11

Allure, or terrifie, or undermine.  
 180 Be frustrate all ye stratagems of Hell,  
 And devillish machinations come to nought.  
 So they in Heav'n their Odes and Vigils tun'd:  
 Mean while the Son of God, who yet some days  
 Lodg'd in *Bethabara* where *John* baptiz'd,  
 Musing and much revolving in his brest,  
 How best the mighty work he might begin  
 Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first  
 Publish his God-like office now mature,  
 One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading;  
 190 And his deep thoughts, the better to converse  
 With solitude, till far from track of men,  
 Thought following thought, and step by step led on,  
 He entred now the bordering Desert wild,  
 And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,  
 His holy Meditations thus pursu'd.  
 O what a multitude of thoughts at once  
 Awakn'd in me swarm, while I consider  
 What from within I feel my self, and hear,  
 What from without comes often to my ears,  
 200 Ill sorting with my present state compar'd.  
 When I was yet a Child, no childish play  
 To me was pleasing, all my mind was set  
 Serious to learn and know, and thence to do  
 What might be publick good; my self I thought  
 Born to that end, born to promote all truth,  
 All righteous things: therefore above my years,  
 The Law of God I read and found it sweet,  
 Made it my whole delight, and in it grew  
 To such perfection, that e're yet my age  
 210 Had measur'd twice six years, at our great Feast  
 I went into the Temple, there to hear

The



The Teachers of our Law, and to propose  
 What might improve my knowledge or their own;  
 And was admir'd by all, yet this not all  
 To which my Spirit aspir'd, victorious deeds  
 Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts, one while  
 To rescue *Israel* from the *Roman* yoke,  
 Then to subdue and quell o're all the earth  
 Brute violence and proud Tyrannick pow'r,  
 220 Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd:  
 Yet held it more humane, more heavenly first  
 By winning words to conquer willing hearts,  
 And make perswasion do the work of fear;  
 At least to try, and teach the erring Soul  
 Not wilfully mis-doing, but unware  
 Mised; the stubborn only to destroy.  
 These growing thoughts my Mother soon perceiving  
 By words at times cast forth inly rejoyc'd,  
 And said to me apart, high are thy thoughts  
 230 O Son, but nourish them and let them soar  
 To what highth sacred vertue and true worth  
 Can raise them, though above example high;  
 By matchless Deeds express thy matchless Sire.  
 For know, thou art no Son of mortal man,  
 Though men esteem thee low of Parentage,  
 Thy Father is the Eternal King who rules  
 All Heaven and Earth, Angels and Sons of men,  
 A messenger from God fore-told thy birth  
 Conceiv'd in me a Virgin, he fore-told  
 240 Thou shouldst be great and sit on *David's* Throne,  
 And of thy kingdom there shall be no end.  
 At thy Nativity a glorious Quire  
 Of Angels in the fields of *Bethlehem* sung  
 To Shepherds watching at their folds by night,

And

And told them the Messiah now was born,  
 Where they might see him, and to thee they came;  
 Directed to the Manger where thou laist,  
 For in the Inn was left no better room:  
 A Star, not seen before in Heaven appearing  
 250 Guided the Wise Men thither from the East,  
 To honour thee with Incense, Myrrh, and Gold,  
 By whose bright course led on they found the place,  
 Affirming it thy Star new grav'n in Heaven,  
 By which they knew the King of *Israel* born.  
 Just *Simeon* and Prophetic *Anna*, warn'd  
 By Vision found thee in the Temple, and spake  
 Before the Altar and the vested Priest,  
 Like things of thee to all that present stood,  
 This having heard, straight I again resolv'd  
 260 The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ  
 Concerning the Messiah, to our Scribes  
 Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake  
 I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie  
 Through many a hard assay even to the death,  
 Ere I the promis'd Kingdom can attain,  
 Or work Redemption for mankind, whose sins  
 Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.  
 Yet neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,  
 The time prefixt I waited, when behold  
 270 The Baptist, (of whose birth I oft had heard,  
 Not new by sight) now come, who was to come  
 Before Messiah and his way prepare.  
 I as all others to his Baptism came,  
 Which I believ'd was from above; but he  
 Strait knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd  
 Me him (for it was shew'n him so from Heaven)  
 Me him whose Harbinger he was; and first

Re-



Refus'd on me his Baptism to confer,  
 As much his greater, and was hardly won;  
 280 But as I rose out of the laving stream,  
 Heaven open'd her eternal doors, from whence  
 The Spirit descended on me like a Dove,  
 And last the sum of all, my Father's voice,  
 Audibly heard from Heav'n, pronounc'd me his,  
 Me his beloved Son, in whom alone  
 He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time  
 Now full, that I no more should live obscure,  
 But openly begin, as best becomes  
 The Authority which I deriv'd from Heaven.

290 And now by some strong motion I am led  
 Into this Wilderness, to what intent  
 I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know;  
 For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.

So spake out Morning Star then in his rise,  
 And looking round on every side beheld  
 A pathless Desert, dusk with horrid shades;  
 The way he came not having mark'd, return  
 Was difficult, by humane steps untrod;  
 And he still on was led, but with such thoughts

300 Accompanied of things past and to come  
 Lodg'd in his brest, as well might recommend  
 Such Solitude before choicest Society.  
 Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill  
 Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night  
 Under the covert of some ancient Oak,  
 Or Cedar, to defend him from the dew,  
 Or harbour'd in one Cave, is not reveal'd;  
 Nor tasted humane food, nor hunger felt  
 Till those days ended, hunger'd then at last  
 310 Among wild Beasts: they at his sight grew mild,

Nor

Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd, his walk  
 The fiery Serpent fled, and noxious Worm,  
 The Lion and fierce Tiger glar'd aloof.  
 But now an aged man in Rural weeds,  
 Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray Ewe,  
 Or wither'd sticks to gather; which might serve  
 Against a Winters day when winds blow keen,  
 To warm him wet return'd from field at Eve,  
 He saw approach, who first with curious eye  
 320 Perus'd him, then with words thus utt' red spake.

Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place  
 So far from path or road of men, who pass  
 In Troop or Caravan, for single none  
 Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here  
 His Carcass, pin'd with hunger and with droughth?  
 I ask the rather, and the more admire,  
 For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late  
 Our new baptizing Prophet at the Ford  
 Of *Jordan* honour'd so, and call'd thee Son  
 330 Of God; I saw and heard, for we sometimes  
 Who dwelt this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth  
 To Town or Village nigh (nighest is far)  
 Where ought we hear, and curious are to hear,  
 What happ'ns new; Fame also finds us out.

To whom the Son of God. Who brought me hither  
 Will bring me hence, no other Guide I seek.

By Miracle he may, reply'd the Swain,  
 What other way I see not, for we here  
 Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inur'd  
 340 More than the Camel, and to drink go far,  
 Men to much misery and hardship born;  
 But if thou be the Son of God, Command  
 That out of these hard stones be made thee bread;

So



So shalt thou save thy self and us relieve  
 With Food, whereof we wretched seldome taste.  
 He ended, and the Son of God reply'd.  
 Think'st thou such force in Bread? is it not written  
 (For I discern thee other then thou seem'st)  
 Man lives not by Bread only, but each Word  
 350 Proceeding from the mouth of God; who fed  
 Our Fathers here with Manna; in the Mount  
 Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank,  
 And forty days *Eliab* without food  
 Wandred this barren waste, the same I now:  
 Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,  
 Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?  
 Whom thus answer'd th' Arch Fiend now undis-  
 'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate, (guis'd,  
 Who leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt  
 360 Kept not my happy Station, but was driv'n  
 With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,  
 Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd  
 By rigour unconniving, but that oft  
 Leaving my dolorous Prison I enjoy  
 Large liberty to round this Globe of Earth,  
 Or range in th' Air, nor from the Heav'n of Heav'ns  
 Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.  
 I came among the Sons of God, when he  
 Gave up into my hands *Uzzean* *Job*  
 370 To prove him, and illustrate his high worth;  
 And when to all his Angels he propos'd  
 To draw the proud King *Ahab* into fraud  
 That he might fall in *Ramoth*, they demurring,  
 I undertook that Office, and the tongues  
 Of all his flattering Prophets glibb'd with lies  
 To his destruction, as I had in charge.

For

For what he bids I do; though I have lost  
 Much lustre of my native brightness, lost  
 To be lov'd of God, I have not lost  
 380 To love, at least contemplate and admire  
 What I see excellent in good, or fair,  
 Or vertuous, I should so have lost all sense.  
 What can be then less in me than desire  
 To see thee and approach thee, whom I know  
 Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent  
 Thy wisdom, and behold thy God-like deeds?  
 Men generally think me much a foe  
 To all mankind: why should I? they to me  
 Never did wrong or violence, by them  
 390 I lost not what I lost, rather by them  
 I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell  
 Copartner in these Regions of the World,  
 If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,  
 Oft my advice by presages and signs,  
 And answers, oracles, portents and dreams,  
 Whereby they may direct their future life:  
 Envy they say excites me, thus to gain  
 Companions of my misery and wo.  
 At first it may be; but long since with wo  
 400 Never acquainted, now I feel by proof,  
 That fellowship in pain divides not smart,  
 Nor lightens aught each mans peculiar load.  
 Small consolation then, were man adjoyn'd:  
 This wounds me most (what can it less) that Man,  
 Man fall'n shall be restor'd, I never more.  
 To whom our Saviour sternly thus reply'd.  
 Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies  
 From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;  
 Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come

B

410 Into



410 Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns; thou com'st indeed,  
 As a poor miserable captive thrall,  
 Comes to the place where he before had sat  
 Among the Prime in Splendour, now depos'd,  
 Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, shun'd,  
 A spectacle of ruin or of scorn  
 To all the Host of Heaven; the happy place  
 Imperts to thee no happiness, no joy,  
 Rather inflames thy torment, representing  
 Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,  
 420 So never more in Hell then when in Heaven.  
 But thou art serviceable to Heav'ns King.  
 Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear  
 Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?  
 What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem  
 Of righteous *Job*, then cruelly to afflict him  
 With all inflictions, but his patience won?  
 The other service was thy chosen task,  
 To be a liar in four hundred mouths;  
 For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.  
 430 Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all Oracles  
 By thee are giv'n, and what confest more true  
 Among the Nations? that hath been thy craft,  
 By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.  
 But what have been thy answers, what but dark  
 Ambiguous and with double sense deluding,  
 Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,  
 And not well understood as good not known?  
 Who ever by consulting at thy shrine  
 Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct  
 440 To flee or follow what concern'd him most,  
 And run not sooner to his fatal snare?  
 For God hath justly giv'n the Nations up

To thy Delusions; justly, since they fell  
 Idolatrous, but when his purpose is  
 Among them to declare his Providence  
 To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth?  
 But from him or his Angels President  
 In every Province, who themselves disdaining  
 To approach thy Temples, give thee in command  
 450 What to the smallest title thou shalt say  
 To thy Adorers; thou with trembling fear,  
 Or like a Fawning Parasite obey'st;  
 Then to thy self ascrib'st the truth fore-told.  
 But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd;  
 No more shall thou by oracling abuse  
 The Gentiles; henceforth Oracles are ceast,  
 And thou no more with Pomp and Sacrifice  
 Shalt be enquir'd at *Delphos* or elsewhere,  
 At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.  
 460 God hath now sent his living Oracle  
 Into the World to teach his final will,  
 And sends his Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell  
 In pious Hearts, and inward Oracle  
 To all truth requisite for men to know.  
 So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend,  
 Though inly stung with anger and disdain,  
 Dissembl'd, and this Answer smooth return'd.  
 Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,  
 And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will  
 But misery hath rested from me; where  
 470 Easily canst thou find one miserable,  
 And not inforc'd oft-times to part from truth;  
 If it may stand him more instead to lye,  
 Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?  
 But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord;



From thee I can and must submit endure  
 Check or reproof, and glad to scape so quit.  
 Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,  
 Smooth on the tongue discours't, pleasing to th'ear,  
 480 And tuneable as Silvan Pipe or Song;  
 What wonder then if I delight to hear  
 Her dictates from thy mouth? most men admire  
 Vertue, who follow not her lore: permit me  
 To hear thee when I come (since no man comes)  
 And talk at least, though I despair to attain.  
 Thy Father, who is holy, wise and pure,  
 Suffers the Hypocrite or Atheous Priest  
 To tread his Sacred Courts, and minister  
 About his Altar, handling holy things,  
 490 Praying or vowing, and vouchsaf'd his voice  
 To Balaam Reprobate, a Prophet yet  
 Inspir'd; disdain not such access to me.  
 To whom our Saviour with unalter'd brow.  
 Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,  
 I bid not or forbid; do as thou find'st  
 Permission from above; thou canst not more.  
 He added not; and Satan bowing low  
 His gray dissimulation, disappear'd  
 Into thin Air diffus'd: for now began  
 500 Night with her sullen wings to double-shade  
 The Desert, Fowls in thir clay nests were couch't;  
 And now wild Beasts came forth the woods to roam.

*The End of the first Book.*

PARADISE



PARADISE REGAIN'D,

*The Second BOOK.*

MEan while the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd  
 At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen  
 Him whom they heard so late expressly call'd  
 Jesus Messiah Son of God declar'd,  
 And on that high Authority had believ'd,  
 And with him talkt, and with him lodg'd, I mean  
 Andrew and Simon, famous after known  
 With others though in Holy Writ not nam'd,  
 Now missing him thir joy so lately found,  
 10 So lately found, and so abruptly gone,  
 Began to doubt, and doubted many days,  
 And as the days increas'd, increas'd thir doubt:  
 Sometimes they thought he might be only shewn,  
 And for a time caught up to God, as once  
 Moses was in the Mount, and missing long;  
 And the great Thibite who on fiery wheels  
 Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come.  
 Therefore as those young Prophets then with care  
 Sought lost Eliab, so in each place these  
 20 Nigh to Bethabara; in Jerico  
 The City of Palms, Anon, and Salem Old,  
 B 3 Machærus



*Machærus* and each Town or City wall'd  
 On this side the broad lake *Genezaret*,  
 Or in *Perca*, but return'd in vain.  
 Then on the bank of *Jordan*, by a Creek:  
 Where winds with Reeds, and Osiers whisp'ring play  
 Plain Fishermen, no greater men them call,  
 Close in a Cottage low together got  
 Thir unexpected loss and plaints out breath'd.  
 30 Alas, from that high hope to what relapse  
 Unlook'd for are we fall'n, our eyes beheld  
 Messiah certainly now come, so long  
 Expected of our Fathers; we have heard  
 His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth,  
 Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,  
 The Kingdom shall to *Israel* be restor'd:  
 Thus we joyc'd, but soon our joy is turn'd  
 Into perplexity and new amaze:  
 For whither is he gone, what accident  
 40 Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire  
 After appearance, and again prolong  
 Our expectation? God of *Israel*,  
 Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;  
 Behold the Kings of the Earth how they oppress  
 Thy chosen, to what highth thir pow'r unjust  
 They have exalted, and behind them cast  
 All fear of thee, arise and vindicate  
 Thy Glory, free thy people from thir yoke,  
 But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,  
 50 Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him,  
 By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown,  
 In publick, and with him we have convers'd;  
 Let us beglad of this, and all our fears  
 Lay on his Providence; he will not fail

Not

Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall,  
 Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence,  
 Soon we shall see our hope, our joy return.

Thus they out of their plaints new hope resume  
 To find whom at the first they found unfought:

60 But to his Mother *Mary*, when she saw  
 Others return'd from Baptism, not her Son,  
 Nor left at *Jordan*, tidings of him none;  
 Within her brest, though calm; her brest though pure,  
 Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd  
 Some troubl'd thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad.

O what avails me now that honour high  
 To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute  
 Hale highly favour'd, among women blest;  
 While to sorrows am no less advanc't,

70 And fears as eminent, above the lot  
 Of other women, by the birth I bore,  
 In such a season born when scarce a Shed  
 Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me  
 From the bleak air; a Stable was our warmth,  
 A Manger his, yet soon enforc't to fly  
 Thence into *Egypt*, till the Murd'rous King  
 Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd  
 With Infant blood the streets of *Bethlehem*;  
 From *Egypt* home return'd, in *Nazareth*

80 Hath been our dwelling many years, his life  
 Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,  
 Little suspicious to any King; but now  
 Full grown to Man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,  
 By *John* the Baptist, and in publick shown,  
 Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice;  
 I look'd for some great change; to Honour? no,  
 But trouble, as old *Simeon* plain fore-told;

B 4

That



That to the fall and rising he should be  
 Of many in *Israel*, and to a sign  
 Spoken against, that through my very Soul  
 A sword shall pierce, this is my favour'd lot,  
 My Exaltation to Afflictions high;  
 Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;  
 I will not argue that, nor will repine.  
 But where delays he now? some great intent  
 Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,  
 I lost him, but so found, as well I saw  
 He could not loose himself; but went about  
 His Father's business; what he meant I mus'd,  
 Since understand; much more his absence now  
 Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.  
 But I to wait with patience am inur'd;  
 My heart hath been a store-house long of things  
 And sayings laid up, portending strange events.  
 Thus *Mary* pondring oft, and oft to mind  
 Recalling what remarkably had pass'd  
 Since first her Salutation heard, with thoughts  
 Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:  
 The while her Son tracing the Desert wild,  
 Sole but with holiest Meditations fed,  
 Into himself descended, and at once  
 All his great work to come before him set;  
 How to begin, how to accomplish best  
 His end of being on Earth, and mission high:  
 For Satan with slye preface to return  
 Had left him vacant, and with speed was gon  
 Up to the middle Region of thick Air,  
 Where all his Potentates in Council sate;  
 There without sign of boast, or sign of joy  
 Sollicitous and blank he thus began.

Princes,

Princes, Heavens antient Sons, Æthereal Thro,  
 Demonian Spirits now, from the Element  
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd,  
 Powers of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth beneath,  
 So may we hold our place and these mild seats  
 Without new trouble; such an Enemy  
 Is ris'n to invade us, whom no less  
 Threat'ns our expulsion down to Hell;  
 I, as I undertook, and with the vote  
 Consenting in full freequence was impowr'd,  
 Have found him, view'd him, tasted him, but find  
 Far other labour to be undergon  
 Than when I dealt with *Adam* first of Men,  
 Though *Adam* by his Wives allurements fell,  
 However to this Man inferior far,  
 If he be Man by Mothers side at least,  
 With more than humane gifts from Heaven adorn'd,  
 Perfections absolute, Graces divine,  
 And amplitude of mind to greatest Deeds.  
 Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence  
 Of my success with *Eve* in Paradise  
 Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure  
 Of like succeeding here; I summon all  
 Rather to be in readiness, with hand  
 Or counsel to assist; lest I who erst  
 Thought none my equal, now be over match'd.  
 So spake the old Serpent doubting, and from all  
 With clamour was assur'd thir utmost aid  
 At his command; when from amidst them rose  
 Belial the dissoluteest Spirit that fell,  
 The sensuallest, and after *Asmodai*  
 The fleshliest Incubus, and thus advis'd.  
 Set women in his eye and in his walk,

Among



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 Of many in *Israel*, and to a sign  
 Spoken against, that through my very Soul  
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 The fleshliest Incubus, and thus advis'd.  
 Set women in his eye and in his walk,

Among



3 *Paradise Regain'd.*

mong daughters of men the fairest found ;  
 Many are in each Region passing fair  
 As the noon Skie ; more like to Goddeses  
 Then Mortal Creatures, gracefull and discreet,  
 Expert in amorous Arts, enchanting tongues  
 Persuasive, Virgin majesty with mild  
 160 And sweet allay'd, yet terrible to approach,  
 Skill'd to retire, and in retiring draw  
 Hearts after them tangl'd in Amorous Nets.  
 Such object hath the power to soft'n and tame  
 Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,  
 Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,  
 Draw out with credulous desire, and lead  
 At will the manliest, resolute'st brest,  
 As the Magnetic hardest Iron draws.  
 Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart  
 170 Of wisest *Solomon*, and made him build,  
 And made him bow to the Gods of his Wives.  
 To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd.  
*Belial*, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st  
 All others by thy self; because of old  
 Thou thy self doat'st on womankind, admiring  
 Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,  
 None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.  
 Before the Flood thou with thy lusty Crew,  
 False tirl'd Sons of God, roaming the Earth  
 180 Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,  
 And coupl'd with them, and begot a race.  
 Have we not seen, or by relation heard,  
 In Courts and Regal Chambers how thou lurk'st,  
 In Wood or Grove by mossie Fountain side,  
 In Valley or green Meadow to way-lay  
 Some beauty rare, *Calisto*, *Chymene*,

*Daphne,*

*Paradise Regain'd.* 27

*Daphne*, or *Semele*, *Antiopa*,  
 Or *Anyone*, *Syrinx*, many more  
 Too long, then lay'st thy scapes on names ador'd,  
 190 *Apollo*, *Neptune*, *Jupiter* or *Pan*,  
 Satyr, or Fawn, or *Silvan* ? But these haunts  
 Delight not all, among the Sons of Men,  
 How many have with a smile made small account  
 Of beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd,  
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent ?  
 Remember that *Pellean* Conquerour,  
 A Youth, how all the Beauties of the East  
 He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd ;  
 How he firnam'd of *Africa* dismiss'd  
 200 In his prime youth the fair *Iberian* Maid.  
 For *Solomon* he liv'd at ease, and full  
 Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond  
 Higher design than to enjoy his State ;  
 Thence to the bait of Women lay expos'd ;  
 But he whom we attempt is wiser far  
 Than *Solomon*, of more exalted mind,  
 Made and set wholly on the accomplishment  
 Of greatest things, what Woman will you find,  
 Though of this age the wonder and the fame,  
 210 On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye  
 Of fond desire ? or should she confident,  
 As sitting Queen ador'd on Beauties Throne,  
 Descend with all her winning charms begirt  
 To enamour, as the Zone of *Venus* once  
 Wrought that effect on *Jove*, so Fables tell ;  
 How would one look for his Majestick brow  
 Seated as on the top of Vertues hill,  
 Discount'nance her despis'd, and put to rout,  
 All her array ; her female pride deject,

220 Or



220 Or turn to reverent awe? for Beauty stands  
 In the admiration only of weak minds  
 Led captive; cease to admire, and all her Plumes  
 Fall flat and shrink into a trivial toy,  
 At every sudden slighting quite abasht:  
 Therefore with manlier objects we must try  
 His constancy, with such as have more shew  
 Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise;  
 Rocks whereon greatest Men have ofttest wreck'd;  
 Or that which only seems to satisfie  
 230 Lawfull desires of Nature, not beyond;  
 And now I know he hungers where no food  
 Is to be found; in the wild Wilderness,  
 The rest commit to me, I shall let pass  
 No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.  
 He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclaim;  
 Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band  
 Of Spirits likest to himself in guile  
 To be at hand, and at his beck appear,  
 If cause were to unfold some active Scene  
 240 Of various Persons each to know his part;  
 Then to the Desert takes with these his flight;  
 Where still from shade to shade the Son of God  
 After forty days fasting had remain'd,  
 Now hungry first, and to himself thus said.  
 Where will this end? four times ten days I have  
 Wandring this woody maze, and humane food (pass'd  
 Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that Fast  
 To Vertue I impute not, or count part  
 Of what I suffer here; if Nature need not,  
 250 Or God support Nature without repast  
 Though needing, what praise is it to endure?  
 But now I feel, I hunger, which declares,

Nature

Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God  
 Can satisfie that need some other way,  
 Though hunger still remain: so it remain  
 Without this bodies wasting, I content me,  
 And from the sting of Famine fear no harm,  
 Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts that feed  
 Me hungry more to do my Fathers will.  
 260 It was the hour of night, when thus the Son  
 Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down  
 Under the hospitable covert nigh  
 Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,  
 And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,  
 Of meats and drinks, Natures refreshment sweet;  
 Him thought, he by the Brook of *Cherith* stood  
 And saw the Ravens with their horny beaks  
 Food to *Elijah* bringing Even and Morn,  
 Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they  
 270 He saw the Prophet also how he fled (brought:  
 Into the Desert, and how there he slept  
 Under a Juniper; then how awak't,  
 He found his Supper on the coals prepar'd,  
 And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,  
 And eat the second time after repose,  
 The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days;  
 Sometimes that with *Elijah* he partook,  
 Or as a guest with *Daniel* at his Pulse.  
 Thus wore out night, and now the Herald Lark  
 280 Left his ground-nest, high trowing to discry  
 The morns approach, and greet her with his Song:  
 As lightly from his grassy couch up rose  
 Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream,  
 Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd.  
 Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd,

From



From whose high top to ken the prospect round,  
 If Cottage were in view, Sheep-cote or Herd;  
 But Cottage, Herd or Sheep-cote none he saw,  
 Only in a bottom saw a pleasant Grove,  
 290 With chaunt of tunefull Birds resounding loud;  
 Thither he bent his way, determin'd there  
 To rest at noon, and entr'd soon the shade  
 High roost and walks beneath, and alleys brown,  
 That open'd in the midst a woody Scene,  
 Natures own work it seem'd (Nature taught Art)  
 And to a Superstitious eye the haunt  
 Of Wood-Gods and Wood-Nymphs; he view'd it  
 When suddenly a man before him stood, (round,  
 Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,  
 300 As one in City, or Court, or Palace bred,  
 And with fair speech these words to him address'd.  
 With granted leave officious I return,  
 But much more wonder that the Son of God  
 In this wild solitude so long should bide  
 Of all things destitute, and well I know,  
 Not without hunger. Others of some note,  
 As story tells, have trod this Wilderness;  
 The fugitive Bond-woman with her Son  
 Outcast *Nebaioth*, yet found he relief  
 310 By a providing Angel; all the race  
 Of *Israel* here had famish'd, had not God  
 Rain'd from Heaven Manna, and that Prophet bold  
 Native of *Thebes* wandring here was fed  
 Twice by a voice inviting him to eat,  
 Of thee these forty days none hath regard,  
 Forty and more deserted here indeed.  
 To whom thus Jesus; what conclud'st thou hence?  
 They all had need, I as thou seest have none.

How

How hast thou hunger then? Satan reply'd,  
 320 Tell me if Food were now before thee set,  
 Would'st thou not eat? Thereafter as I like  
 The giver, answer'd Jesus. Why should that  
 Cause thy refusal, said the subtle Fiend,  
 Hast thou not right to all Created things,  
 Ow not all Creatures by just right to thee  
 Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,  
 But tender all their power? nor mention I  
 Meats by the Law unclean, or offer'd first  
 To Idols, those young *Daniel* could refuse;  
 330 Nor proffer'd by an Enemy, though who  
 Would scruple that, with want oppress'd? Behold  
 Nature asham'd, or better to express,  
 Troubl'd that thou should'st hunger, hath purvey'd  
 From all the Elements her choicest store  
 To treat thee as befits, and as her Lord  
 With honour, only deign to sit and eat.  
 He spake no dream, for as his words had end,  
 Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld  
 In ample space under the broadest shade  
 340 A Table richly spread, in Regal mode,  
 With dishes pill'd, and meats of noblest sort  
 And savour, Beasts of chase, or Fowl of game,  
 In Pastry built, or from the spit, or boyl'd,  
 Gris-amber-steam'd; all Fish from Sea or Shore,  
 Freshet, or purling Brook, of shell or fin,  
 And exquisite name, for which was drain'd  
*Pontus* and *Lucrine* Bay, and *Afric* Coast.  
 Alas how simple, to these Cates compar'd,  
 Was that crude Apple that diverted *Eve*!  
 350 And at a stately side-board by the wine  
 That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood

Tall



Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hew  
 Than *Ganymed* or *Hylas*, distant more  
 Under the Trees now trip'd, now solemn stood  
 Nymphs of *Diana's* train, and *Naiades*  
 With fruits and flowers from *Amalthea's* horn,  
 And Ladies of the *Hesperides*, that seem'd  
 Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabl'd since  
 Of Fairy Damsels met in forest wide  
 360 By Knights of *Logres*, or of *Lyones*,  
*Lancelot* or *Pelleas*, or *Pellenore*,  
 And all the while harmonious Aires were heard  
 Of chiming strings, or charming pipes and winds  
 Of gentlest gale *Arabian* odors fann'd  
 From their soft wings, and *Flora's* earliest smells.  
 Such was the splendour, and the Tempter now  
 His invitation earnestly renew'd.

What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?  
 These are not fruits forbidden, no interdict  
 370 Defends the touching of these Viands pure,  
 Their taste no knowledge, works at least of evil,  
 But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,  
 Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.  
 All these are Spirits of Air, and Woods, and Springs,  
 Thy gentle Ministers, who come to pay  
 Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord:  
 What doubt'st thou Son of God? sit down and eat.

To whom thus Jesus temperately reply'd:  
 Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?  
 380 And who withholds my pow'r that right to use?  
 Shall I receive by gift what of my own,  
 When and where likes me best, I can command?  
 I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,  
 Command a Table in this Wilderness,

And

And call swift flights of Angels ministrant  
 Array'd in Glory on my cup to attend:  
 Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,  
 In vain, where no acceptance it can find,  
 And with my hunger what hast thou to do?  
 390 Thy pompous Delicacies I contemn,  
 And count thy specious gifts no gifts but guiles.  
 To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent:  
 That I have also power to give thou seest,  
 If of that pow'r I bring thee voluntary  
 What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd,  
 And rather opportunely in this place  
 Chose to impart to thy apparent need,  
 Why shouldst thou not accept it? but I see  
 What I can do or offer is suspect;  
 400 Of these things others quickly will dispose  
 Whose pains have earn'd the far fet spoil. With that  
 Both Table and Provision vanish quite  
 With sound of Harpies wings, and Talons heard;  
 Only the importune Tempter still remain'd,  
 And with these words his temptation pursu'd.  
 By hunger, that each other Creature tames,  
 Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;  
 Thy temperance invincible besides,  
 For no allurement yields to appetite,  
 410 And all thy heart is set on high designs,  
 High actions; but wherewith to be achiev'd?  
 Great acts require great means of enterprise,  
 Thou art unknow, unfriended, low of Birth,  
 A Carpenter thy Father known, thy self  
 Bred up in poverty and streights at home;  
 Lost in a Desert here and hunger-bit:  
 Which way or from what hope dost thou aspire

C

To



To greatness? whence Authority deriv'd,  
 What Followers, what Retinue canst thou gain,  
 420 Or at thy heels the dizzy Multitude,  
 Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?  
 Money brings Honour, Friends, Conquest and Realm;  
 What rais'd *Antipater* the *Edomite*,  
 And his Son *Herod* plac'd on *Juda's* Throne;  
 (Thy throne) but gold that got him puissant friends?  
 Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,  
 Get Riches first, get Wealth, and Treasure heap,  
 Not difficult, if thou hearken to me,  
 Riches are mine, Fortune is in my hand;  
 430 They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,  
 While Vertue, Valour, Wisdom sit in want.  
 To whom thus Jesus patiently reply'd;  
 Yet Wealth without these three is impotent,  
 To gain dominion or to keep it gain'd.  
 Witness those ancient Empires of the Earth,  
 In highth of all thir flowing wealth dissolv'd:  
 But men endu'd with these have oft attain'd  
 In lowest poverty to highest deeds;  
*Gideon* and *Jephtha*, and the Shepherd lad,  
 440 Whose off-spring on the Throne of *Juda* sat  
 So many Ages, and shall yet regain  
 That seat, and reign in *Israel* without end.  
 Among the Heathen, (for throughout the World  
 To me is not unknown what hath been done  
 Worthy of Memorial) canst thou not remember  
*Quintius*, *Fabritius*, *Curius*, *Regulus*?  
 For I esteem those names of men so poor  
 Who could do mighty things, and could contemn  
 Riches though offer'd from the hand of Kings.  
 450 And what in me seems wanting, but that I

May also in this poverty as soon  
 Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?  
 Extol not Riches then, the toyl of Fools,  
 The wise mans cumbrance if not snare, more apt  
 To slacken Vertue, and abate her edge,  
 Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise,  
 What if with like aversion I reject  
 Riches and Realms; yet not for that a Crown,  
 Golden in shew, is but a wreath of thorns,  
 460 Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights  
 To him who wears the Regal Diadem,  
 When on his shoulders each mans burden lies;  
 For therein stands the office of a King,  
 His Honour, Vertue, Merit and chief Praise,  
 That for the Publick all this weight he bears.  
 Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules  
 Passions, Desires, and Fears, is more a King;  
 Which every wise and vertuous man attains:  
 And who attains not, ill aspires to rule  
 470 Cities of men, or head-strong Multitudes,  
 Subject himself to Anarchy within,  
 Or lawless passions in him which he serves.  
 But to guide Nations in the way of truth  
 By saving Doctrine, and from error lead  
 To know, and knowing worship God aright,  
 Is yet more Kingly, this attracts the Soul,  
 Governs the inner man, the nobler part,  
 That other o're the body only reigns,  
 And oft by force, which to a generous mind  
 480 So reigning can be no sincere delight.  
 Besides to give a Kingdom hath been thought  
 Greater and nobler done, and to lay down  
 Far more magnanimous, than to assume.



Riches are needles then, both for themselves,  
And for thy reason why they should be sought,  
To gain a Scepter, oft' st better mis's't.

*The End of the Second Book.*

PARADISE



PARADISE REGAIN'D.

*The Third BOOK.*

**S**O spake the Son of God, and Satan stood  
A while as mute confounded what to say,  
What to reply, confuted and convinc't  
Of his weak arguing, and fallacious drift;  
At length collecting all his Serpent wiles,  
With soothing words renew'd, him thus accosts.  
I see thou know'st what is of use to know,  
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;  
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words  
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart  
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.  
Should Kings and Nations from thy mouth consult,  
Thy Counsel would be as the Oracle  
*Urim* and *Thummim*, those oraculous gems  
On *Aaron's* breast: or tongue of Seers old  
Infallible; or wert thou sought to deeds  
That might require th' array of war thy skill  
Of conduct would be such, that all the world  
Could not sustain thy Prowess, or subsist  
In battel, though against thy few in arms.  
These God-like Vertues wherefore dost thou hide?



Affecting private life, or more obscure  
 In savage Wilderderneſs, wherefore deprive  
 All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thy ſelf  
 The fame and glory, glory the reward  
 That ſole excites to high attempts the flame  
 Of moſt erected Spirits, moſt temper'd pure  
 Ætherial, who all pleaſures elſe deſpiſe,  
 All treaſures and all gain eſteem as droſs,  
 30 And dignities and powers all but the higheſt?  
 Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe, the ſon  
 Of *Macedonian Philip* had e're theſe  
 Won *Aſia* and the Throne of *Cyrus* held  
 At his diſpoſe, young *Scipio* had brought down  
 The *Carthaginian* pride, young *Pompey* quell'd  
 The *Pontic* King and in triumph had rode.  
 Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,  
 Quench not the thirſt of glory, but augment.  
 Great *Julius*, whom now all the world admires  
 40 The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd  
 With glory, wept that he had liv'd ſo long  
 Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late.  
 To whom our Saviour calmly thus reply'd.  
 Thou neither doſt perſuade me to ſeek wealth  
 For Empires ſake, nor Empire to affect  
 For glories ſake by all thy argument.  
 For what is glory but the blaze of fame,  
 The peoples praiſe, if always praiſe unmixt?  
 And what the people but a herd confus'd,  
 50 A miſcellaneous rabble, who extol (praiſe,  
 Things vulgar, and well weigh'd, ſcarce worth the  
 They praiſe and they admire they know not what;  
 And know not whom, but as one leads the other;  
 And what delight to be by ſuch extoll'd,

To live upon thir tongues and be thir talk,  
 Of whom to be diſprais'd were no ſmall praiſe?  
 His lot who dares be ſingularly good.  
 Th' intelligent among them and the wiſe  
 Are few, and glory ſcarce of few is rais'd.  
 60 This is true glory and renown, when God  
 Looking on the Earth, with approbation marks  
 The juſt man, and devulges him through Heaven  
 To all his Angels, who with true applauſe  
 Recount his praiſes; thus he did to *Job*,  
 When to extend his fame through Heaven & Earth,  
 As thou to thy reproach mayſt well remember,  
 He ask'd thee, haſt thou ſeen my ſervant *Job*?  
 Famous he was in Heaven, on Earth leſs known;  
 Where glory is falſe glory, attributed  
 70 To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame.  
 They err who count it glorious to ſubdue  
 By Conqueſt far and wide, to over-run  
 Large Countries, and in field great Battels win,  
 Great Cities by aſſault: what do theſe Worthies,  
 But rob and ſpoil, burn, ſlaughter, and enſlave  
 Peaceable Nations, neighbouring, or remote,  
 Made Captive, yet deſerving freedom more  
 Than thoſe thir Conquerours, who leave behind  
 Nothing but ruin whereſoe're they rove,  
 80 And all the flouriſhing works of peace deſtroy,  
 Then ſwell with pride, and muſt be titl'd Gods,  
 Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,  
 Worſhip't with Temple, Prieſt and Sacrifice;  
 One is the Son of *Jove*, of *Mars* the other,  
 Till Conquerour Death diſcover them ſcarce men,  
 Rowling in brutiſh vices, and deform'd,  
 Violent or ſhamefull death thir due reward.



But if there be in glory aught of good,  
 It may by means far different be attain'd  
 90 Without ambition, war, or violence;  
 By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,  
 By patience, temperance; I mention still  
 Him whom thy wrongs with Saintly patience born,  
 Made famous in a Land and times obscure;  
 Who names not now with honour patient *Job*?  
 Poor *Socrates* (who next more memorable?)  
 By what he taught and suffer'd for so doing,  
 For truths sake suffering death unjust, lives now  
 Equal in fame to proudest Conquerours.  
 100 Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,  
 Aught suffer'd; if young *African* for fame  
 His wasted Country freed from *Punic* rage,  
 The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,  
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.  
 Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek  
 Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his  
 Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am.  
 To whom the Tempter murmuring thus reply'd,  
 Think not so slight of glory; therein least  
 110 Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,  
 And for his glory all things made, all things  
 Orders and Governs, nor content in Heaven  
 By all his Angels glorifi'd, requires  
 Glory from men, from all men good or bad,  
 Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption;  
 Above all Sacrifice, or hallow'd gift  
 Glory he requires, and glory he receives  
 Promiscuous from all Nations, Jew, or Greek,  
 Or Barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd;  
 120 From us his foes pronounc't glory he exacts.  
 To whom our Saviour fervently reply'd,

And

And reason; since his word all things produc'd,  
 Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,  
 But to shew forth his goodness and impart  
 His good communicable to every soul  
 Freely; of whom what could he less expect  
 Then glory and benediction, that it thanks,  
 The slightest, easiest, readiest recompence  
 From them who could return him nothing else,  
 130 And not returning that would likeliest render  
 Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?  
 Hard recompence, unsutable return  
 For so much good, so much beneficence.  
 But why should man seek glory? who of his own  
 Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs  
 But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?  
 Who for so many benefits receiv'd  
 Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,  
 And so of all true good himself despoil'd,  
 140 Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take  
 That which to God alone of right belongs;  
 Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,  
 That who advance his glory, not thir own,  
 Them he himself to glory will advance.  
 So spake the Son of God; and here again  
 Satan had not to answer, but stood struck  
 with guilt of his own sin, for he himself  
 Insatiable of glory had lost all,  
 Yet of another Plea bethought him soon.  
 150 Of glory, as thou wilt, said he, so deem,  
 Worth or not worth their seeking, let it pass:  
 But to a Kingdom thou art born, ordain'd  
 To sit upon thy Father *David's* Throne;  
 By Mothers side thy Father, though thy right

Be



Be now in powerfull hands, that will not part  
 Easily from possession won with arms;  
*Judæa* now and all the promis'd land  
 Reduc't a Province under *Roman* yoke,  
 Obeys *Tiberius*; nor is always rul'd  
 160 With temperate sway; oft have they violated  
 The Temple, oft the Law with foul affronts,  
 Abominations rather, as did once  
*Antiochus*: and think'st thou to regain  
 Thy right by sitting still or thus retiring?  
 So did not *Machabees*: he indeed  
 Retir'd unto the Desert, but with arms;  
 And o're a mighty King so oft prevail'd  
 That by strong hand his Family obtain'd,  
 Though Priests, the Crown, and *Dauids* Throne u-  
 170 With *Modin* and her Suburbs once content. (surp'd,  
 If Kingdom move thee not, let move thee Zeal,  
 And duty; Zeal and duty are not slow;  
 But on Occasions forelock watchfull wait.  
 They themselves rather are occasion best,  
 Zeal of thy Fathers house, Duty to free  
 Thy Country from her Heathen servitude;  
 So shalt thou best fulfill, best verifie  
 The Prophets old, who sung thy endless reign,  
 The happier reign the sooner it begins,  
 180 Reign then; what canst thou better do the while?  
 To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd.  
 All things are best fulfill'd in their due time,  
 And time there is for all things, Truth hath said:  
 If of my reign prophetic Writ hath told,  
 That it shall never end, so when begin  
 The Father in his purpose hath decreed,  
 He in whose hand all times and seasons roul.

What

What if he hath decreed that I shall first  
 Be try'd in humble state, and things adverse,  
 190 By tribulations, injuries, insults,  
 Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,  
 Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting  
 Without distrust or doubt, that he may know  
 What I can suffer, how obey? who best  
 Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first  
 Well hath obey'd; just tryal e're I merit  
 My exaltation without change or end.  
 But what concerns it thee when I begin  
 My everlasting Kingdom, why art thou  
 200 Sollicitous, what moves thy inquisition?  
 Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,  
 And my promotion will be thy destruction?  
 To whom the Tempter inly rackt reply'd.  
 Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost  
 Of my reception into grace; what worse?  
 For where no hope is left, is left no fear;  
 If there be worse, the expectation more  
 Of worse torments me than the feeling can.  
 I would be at the worst; worst is my Port,  
 210 My harbour and my ultimate repose,  
 The end I would attain, my final good.  
 My error was my error, and my crime  
 My crime; whatever for it self condemn'd,  
 And will alike be punish'd; whether thou  
 Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow  
 Willingly I could flie, and hope thy reign,  
 From that placid aspect and meek regard,  
 Rather than aggravate my evil state,  
 Would stand between me and thy Fathers ire,  
 220 (Whose ire I dread more than the fire of Hell)



A shelter and a kind of shading cool  
 Interposition, as a summers cloud.  
 If I then to the worst that can be hast,  
 Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,  
 Happiest both to thy self and all the world,  
 That thou who worthiest art should'st be thir King?  
 Perhaps thou lingrest in deep thoughts detain'd  
 Of the enterprize so hazardous and high;  
 No wonder, for though in thee be united  
 230 What of perfection can in man be found,  
 Or human nature can receive, consider  
 Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent  
 At home, scarce view'd the *Gallilean* Towns,  
 And once a year *Jerusalem*, few days  
 Short sojourn; and what thence could'st thou observe?  
 The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,  
 Empires, and Monarchs, and thir radiant Courts,  
 Best school of best experience, quickest in sight  
 In all things that to greatest actions lead.  
 240 The wisest, unexperienc't, will be ever  
 Timorous and loth, with novice modesty,  
 (As he who seeking Asses found a Kingdom)  
 Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous:  
 But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit  
 Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes  
 The Monarchies of the Earth, thir pomp and state,  
 Sufficient introduction to inform  
 Thee, of thy self so apt, in regal Arts,  
 And regal Mysteries; that thou may'st know  
 250 How best their opposition to withstand.  
 With that (such power was giv'n him then) he took  
 The Son of God up to a Mountain high.  
 It was a Mountain at whose verdant feet

A spacious plain out stretch't in circuit wide  
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd,  
 Th' one winding, the other strait and left between  
 Fair *Champaign* with less rivers interveind,  
 Then meeting joyn'd their tribute to the Sea,  
 Fertil of corn the glebe, of oyl and wine,  
 260 With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the hills,  
 Huge Cities and high tow'r'd, that well might seem  
 The seats of mightiest Monarchs, and so large  
 The Prospect was, that here and there was room  
 For barren desert fountainless and dry.  
 To this high mountain top the Tempter brought  
 Our Saviour, and new train of words began.  
 Well have we speeded, and o're hill and dale,  
 Forest and field, and flood, Temples and Towers  
 Cut shorter many a league; here thou behold'st  
*Assyria* and her Empires ancient bounds,  
 270 *Araxes* and the *Caspian* lake, thence on  
 As far as *Indus* East, *Euphrates* West,  
 And oft beyond; to South the *Persian* Bay,  
 And inaccessible the *Arabian* drouth:  
 Here *Ninevee*, of length within her wall  
 Several days journey, built by *Ninus* old,  
 Of that first golden Monarchy the seat,  
 And seat of *Salmanassar*, whose success  
*Israel* in long captivity still mourns;  
 There *Babylon* the wonder of all tongues,  
 280 As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice  
*Judah* and all thy Father *David's* house  
 Led captive, and *Jerusalem* laid waste,  
 Till *Cyrus* set them free; *Persopolis*  
 His City there thou seest, and *Bactra* there;  
*Ecbatana* her structure vast there shews,



And *Hecatompylos* her hundred gates,  
 There *Susa* by *Choaspes*, amber stream,  
 The drink of none but Kings; of later fame  
 Built by *Emathian*, or by *Parthian* hands,  
 290 The great *Seleucia*, *Nisibis*, and there  
*Artaxata*, *Teredon*, *Tesiphon*,  
 Turning with easie eye thou may'st behold.  
 All these the *Parthian*, now some Ages past,  
 By great *Arfaces* led, who founded first  
 That Empire, under his dominion holds  
 From the luxurious Kings of *Antioch* won.  
 And just in time thou com'st to have a view  
 Of his great power; for now the *Parthian* King  
 In *Ctesiphon* hath gather'd all his Host  
 300 Against the *Scythian*, whose incursions wild  
 Have wasted *Sogdiana*; to her aid  
 He marches now in hast; see, though from far,  
 His thousands, in what Martial equipage  
 They issue forth, Steel Bows, and Shafts their arms  
 Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;  
 All Horsemen, in which fight they most excel;  
 See how in warlike Muster they appear,  
 In Rhombs and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.  
 He look't and saw what numbers numberless  
 310 The city gates out pour'd, light armed Troops  
 In coats of Mail and Military pride;  
 In Mail thir horses clad, yet fleet and strong,  
 Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and choice  
 Of many Provinces from bound to bound;  
 From *Arachosia*, from *Gandaor* East,  
 And *Margiana* to the *Hyrcanian* cliffs  
 Of *Caucasus*, and dark *Iberian* dales,  
 From *Atropatia* and the neighbouring plains

Of *Adiabene*, *Media*, and the South  
 320 Of *Susiana*, to *Balsara's* hav'n.  
 He saw them in thir forms of battel rang'd,  
 How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them shot  
 Sharp fleet of arrowy shower against the face  
 Of thir pursuers, and overcame by flight;  
 The field all iron cast a gleaming brown,  
 Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn,  
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight;  
 Chariots or Elephants endorft with Towers  
 Of Archers, nor of labouring Pioners  
 330 A multitude with Spades and Axes arm'd  
 To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,  
 Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay  
 With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;  
 Mules after these, Camels and Dromedaries,  
 And Waggons fraught with Utenfils of war.  
 Such forces met not, nor so wide a Camp,  
 When *Agrican* with all his Northern powers  
 Besieg'd *Albracca*, as Romances tell;  
 The city of *Gallaphrone*, from thence to win  
 340 The fairest of her Sex *Angelica*  
 His daughter, sought by many Prowest Knights,  
 Both *Paynim*, and the Peers of *Charlemane*.  
 Such and so numerous was thir Chivalry;  
 At fight whereof the Fiend yet more presum'd,  
 And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd.  
 That thou may'st know I seek not to engage  
 Thy vertue, and not every way secure  
 On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark  
 To what end I have brought thee hither and shewn  
 350 All this fair sight; thy Kingdom though foretold  
 By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou



Endeavour, as thy Father *David* did,  
 Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still  
 In all things, and all men, supposes means  
 Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.  
 But say thou wert possess'd of *David's* Throne  
 By free consent of all, none opposite,  
*Samaritan* or *Jew*; how could'st thou hope  
 Long to enjoy it quiet and secure,  
 360 Between two such enclosing enemies  
*Roman* and *Parthian*? therefore one of these  
 Thou must make sure thy own, the *Parthian* first  
 By my advice, as nearer and of late  
 Found able by invasion to annoy  
 Thy country, and captive lead away her Kings  
*Antigonus*, and old *Hyrchanus* bound,  
 Maugre the *Roman*: it shall be my task  
 To render thee the *Parthian* at dispose;  
 Chuse which thou wilt, by conquest or by league.  
 370 By him thou shalt regain, without him not,  
 That which alone can truly reinstall thee  
 In *David's* royal Seat, his true Successor,  
 Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten Tribes  
 Whose off-spring in his Territory yet serve  
 In *Habor*, and among the *Medes* dispers't  
 Ten Sons of *Jacob*, two of *Joseph* lost  
 Thus long from *Israel*; serving as of old  
 Their Fathers in the land of *Egypt* serv'd,  
 This offer sets before thee to deliver.  
 380 These if from servitude thou shalt restore  
 To thir inheritance, then, nor till then,  
 Thou on the Throne of *David* in full glory,  
 From *Egypt* to *Euphrates* and beyond  
 Shalt reign, and *Rome* or *Cæsar* not need fear.

To

To whom our Saviour answer'd thus unmov'd.  
 Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm,  
 And fragile arms, much instrument of war  
 Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,  
 Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear  
 390 Vented much policy, and projects deep  
 Of enemies, of aids, battels and leagues,  
 Plausible to the World, to me worth naught.  
 Means I must use thou say'st, prediction else  
 Will unpredict and fail me of the Throne:  
 My time I told thee, (and that time for thee  
 Were better farthest off) is not yet come;  
 When that comes think not thou to find me slack  
 On my part aught endeavouring, or to need  
 Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome  
 400 Luggage of War there shewn me, argument  
 Of human weakness rather than of strength.  
 My Brethren, as thou call'st them; those Ten Tribes  
 I must deliver, if I mean to reign  
*David's* true heir, and his full Scepter sway  
 To just extent over all *Israel's* Sons;  
 But whence to thee this zeal, where was it then  
 For *Israel*, or for *David*, or his Throne,  
 When thou stood'st up his Tempter to the pride  
 Of numbring *Israel*, which cost the lives  
 410 Of three score and ten thousand *Israelites*  
 By three days Pestilence? such was thy zeal  
 To *Israel* then, the same that now to me.  
 As for those captive Tribes, themselves were they  
 Who wrought their own captivity, fell off  
 From God to worship Calves, the Deities  
 Of *Egypt*, *Baal* next and *Ashtaroth*,  
 And all the Idolatries of Heathen round,

D.

Besides



Besides thir other worse than heathenish crimes;  
 Nor in the land of their captivity  
 420 Humbled themselves or penitent besought  
 The God of their Fore-fathers; but so dy'd  
 Impenitent, and left a race behind  
 Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce  
 From Gentils, but by Circumcision vain,  
 And God with Idols in their worship joyn'd.  
 Should I of these the liberty regard,  
 Who freed, as to their antient Patrimony,  
 Unhumbl'd, unrepentant, unreform'd,  
 Headlong would follow; and to thir Gods perhaps  
 430 Of *Bethel* and of *Dan*? no, let them serve  
 Thir enemies, who serve Idols with God.  
 Yet he at length, time to himself best known,  
 Remembring *Abraham* by some wond'rous call  
 May bring them back repentant and sincere,  
 And at their passing cleave the *Affyrian* flood,  
 While to their native land with joy they hast,  
 As the Red Sea and *Jordan* once he cleft,  
 When to the promis'd land thir Fathers pass'd;  
 To his due time and providence I leave them.  
 440 So spake *Israels* true King, and to the Fiend  
 Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.  
 So fares it when with truth falshood contends.

*The End of the Third Book.*

PARADISE



PARADISE REGAIN'D.

*The Fourth BOOK.*

P Erplex'd and troubl'd at his bad success  
 The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,  
 Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope,  
 So oft, and the persuasive Rhetoric  
 That sleek't his tongue, and won so much on *Eve*;  
 So little here, nay lost; but *Eve* was *Eve*,  
 This far his over-match, who self deceiv'd  
 And rash, before-hand had no better weigh'd  
 The strength he was to cope with, or his own:  
 10 But as a man who had been matchless held  
 In cunning, over-reach't where least he thought,  
 To save his credit, and for very spight  
 Still will be tempting him who foys him still,  
 And never cease, though to his shame the more;  
 Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,  
 About the wine-press where sweet moult is powr'd,  
 Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;  
 Or surging waves against a solid rock,  
 Though all to shivers dash't, the assault renew,  
 20 Vain battr'y, and in froth or bubbles end;  
 So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse

D 2

Met



52 *Paradise Regain'd.*

Met ever; and to shamefull silence brought,  
 Yet gives not o're though desperate of success,  
 And his vain importunity pursues.  
 He brought our Saviour to the Western side  
 Of that high mountain, whence he might behold  
 Another plain, long but in bredth not wide,  
 Wash'd by the Southern Sea, and on the North  
 To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills  
 30 That screen'd the fruits of th'earth and seats of men  
 From cold *Septentrion* blasts, thence in the midst  
 Divided by a river, of whose banks  
 On each side an Imperial City stood,  
 With Towers and Temples proudly elevate  
 On seven small Hills, with Palaces adorn'd,  
 Porches and Theatres, Baths, Aqueducts,  
 Statues and Trophees, and Triumphal Arcs,  
 Gardens and Groves presented to his eyes,  
 Above the highth of Mountains interpos'd.  
 40 By what strange *Parallax* or Optick skill  
 Of vision multiplied through air, or glass  
 Of Telescope, were curious to enquire:  
 And now the Tempter thus his silence broke.  
 The City which thou see'st no other deem  
 Then great and glorious *Rome*, Queen of the Earth  
 So far renown'd, and with the spoils enricht  
 Of Nations; there the Capitol thou see'st  
 Above the rest lifting his stately head  
 On the *Tarpeian* rock, her Cittadel  
 50 Impregnable, and there Mount *Palatine*  
 The Imperial Palace, compass huge, and high  
 The Structure, skill of noblest Architects,  
 With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,  
 Turrets and Terrases, and glittering Spires.

Many

*Paradise Regain'd.*

53

Many a fair Edifice besides, more like  
 Houses of Gods (so well I have dispos'd  
 My Aery Microscope) thou may'st behold  
 Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs  
 Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd Artificers  
 60 In Cedar, Marble, Ivory or Gold.  
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see  
 What conflux issuing forth, or entring in,  
 Pretors, Proconsuls to thir Provinces  
 Hastning or on return, in robes of State;  
 Lictors and rods the ensigns of thir power,  
 Legions and Cohorts, turmes of horse and wings:  
 Or Embassies from Regions far remote  
 In various habits on the *Appian* road,  
 Or on the *Emilian*, some from farthest South,  
 70 *Syene*, and where the shadow both way falls,  
*Meroe Nilotic* Isle, and more to West,  
 The Realm of *Bocchus* to the Black-moor Sea;  
 From the *Asian* Kings and *Parthian* among these,  
 From *India* and the golden *Chersones*,  
 And utmost *Indian* Isle *Taprobane*,  
 Dusk faces with white filken Turbants wreath'd:  
 From *Gallia*, *Gades*, and the *Brittish* West,  
*Germans* and *Scythians*, and *Sarmatians* North  
 Beyond *Danubius* to the *Tauric* Pool.  
 80 All Nations now to *Rome* obedience pay,  
 To *Rome's* great Emperour, whose wide domain  
 In ample Territory, wealth and power,  
 Civility of manners, Arts, and Arms,  
 And long Renown thou justly may'st prefer  
 Before the *Parthian*; these two Thrones except,  
 The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,  
 Shar'd among petty Kings too far remov'd;

D 3

These



These having shewn thee, I have shewn thee all  
 The kingdoms of the World, and all thir glory.  
 90 This Emperour hath no Son, and now is old,  
 Old and lascivious, and from *Rome* retir'd  
 To *Capree* an Island small but strong  
 On the *Campanian* shore, with purpose there  
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy,  
 Committing to a wicked Favourite  
 All publick cares, and yet of him suspicious,  
 Hated of all, and hating; with what ease  
 Indu'd with Regal Vertues as thou art,  
 Appearing and beginning noble deeds,  
 100 Might'st thou expel this monster from his Throne  
 Now made a stye, and in his place ascending  
 A victor, people free from servile yoke?  
 And with my help thou may'st; to me the power  
 Is given, and by that right I give it thee.  
 Aim therefore at no less than all the world,  
 Aim at the highest, without the highest attain'd  
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long  
 On *David's* Throne, he prophes'd what will.  
 To whom the Son of God unmov'd reply'd.  
 110 Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show  
 Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,  
 More than of Arms before, allure mine eye,  
 Much less my mind; though thou shouldst add to tell  
 Thir sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts  
 On *Citron* tables or *Atlantic* stone;  
 (For I have also heard, perhaps have read)  
 Their wines of *Setia*, *Cales*, and *Falerne*,  
*Chios* and *Creet*, and how they quaff in Gold,  
 Crystal and Myrrhine cups imboss'd with Gems  
 120 And studs of Pearl, to me should'st tell who thirst

And

And hunger still: then Embassies thou shew'st  
 From Nations far and nigh; what honour that,  
 But tedious wast of time to sit and hear  
 So many hollow complements and lies,  
 Outlandish flatteries? then proceed'st to talk  
 Of the Emperour, how easily subdu'd,  
 How gloriously; I shall, thou say'st, expell  
 A brutish monster: what if I withall  
 Expell a Devil who first made him such?  
 130 Let his tormenter Conscience find him out,  
 For him I was not sent, nor yet to free  
 That People victor once, now vile and base,  
 Deservedly made vassal, who once just,  
 Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquer'd well,  
 But govern ill the Nations under yoke,  
 Peeling their Provinces, exhausted all  
 By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown  
 Of triumph that insulting vanity;  
 Then cruel, by thir sports to blood enur'd  
 140 Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd,  
 Rather by their wealth, and greedier still,  
 Me naur the daily Scene effeminate.  
 The wise and valiant Man would seek to free  
 The thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd,  
 Adould of inward slaves make outward free?  
 150 Now therefore when my season comes to sit  
 On *David's* Throne, it shall be like a tree,  
 Reading and overshadowing all the Earth,  
 As a stone that shall to pieces dash  
 All Monarchies besides throughout the World,  
 And of my Kingdom there shall be no end:  
 Means there shall be to this, but what the means,  
 Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.

D 4

To



To whom the Tempter impudent repli'd.  
 I see all offers made by me how slight  
 Thou valu'st, because offer'd, and reject'st:  
 Nothing will please the difficult and nice,  
 Or nothing more than still to contradict:  
 On the other side know also thou, that I  
 160 On what I offer set as high esteem,  
 Nor what I part with mean to give for naught;  
 All these which in a moment thou behold'st,  
 The Kingdoms of the World to thee I give;  
 For giv'n to me, I give to whom I please,  
 No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,  
 On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,  
 And worship me as thy superior Lord,  
 Easily done, and hold them all of me;  
 For what can less so great a gift deserve?  
 170 Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain.  
 I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less,  
 Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter  
 The abominable terms, impious condition;  
 But I endure the time, till which expir'd, will.  
 Thou hast permission on me. It is wait ply'd.  
 The first of all Commandments, Thou shalt  
 The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve  
 And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound  
 To worship thee accurst, now more accurst to tell  
 180 For this attempt bolder than that on *Eve*,  
 And more blasphemous? which expect to rue.  
 The Kingdoms of the World to thee were giv'n,  
 Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd,  
 Other donation none thou canst produce:  
 If given, by whom but by the King of Kings,  
 God over all Supreme? if giv'n to thee,

By thee how fairly is the Giver now  
 Repaid? But gratitude in thee is lost  
 Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,  
 190 As offer them to me the Son of God,  
 To me my own, on such abhorred pact,  
 That I fall down and worship thee as God?  
 Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st  
 That Evil one, Satan for ever damn'd.  
 To whom the Fiend with fear abasht repli'd.  
 Be not so sore offended, Son of God;  
 Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men,  
 If I to try whether in higher sort  
 Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd  
 200 What both from men and Angels I receive,  
 Tetrachs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth  
 Nations besides from all the quarter'd winds,  
 God of this world invok't and world beneath;  
 Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold  
 To me so fatal, me it most concerns.  
 The tryal hath indamag'd thee no way,  
 Rather more honour left and more esteem;  
 Me naught advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.  
 Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,  
 The Kingdoms of this world; I shall no more  
 Advise thee, gain them as thou canst, or not.  
 210 And thou thy self seem'st otherwise inclin'd  
 Then to a worldly Crown, addicted more  
 To contemplation and profound dispute,  
 As by that early action may be judg'd,  
 When slipping from thy Mothers eye thou went'st  
 Alone into the Temple; there was found  
 Among the gravest Rabbies disputant  
 On points and questions fitting *Moses* Chair,  
 Teach-



Teaching not taught; the childhood shews the man,  
 As morning shews the day. Be famous then  
 By wisdom; as thy Empire must extend,  
 220 So let extend thy mind or'e all the world,  
 In knowledge, all things in it comprehend,  
 All knowledge is not couch't in *Moses* Law,  
 The *Pentateuch* or what the Prophets wrote,  
 The *Gentiles* also know, and write, and teach  
 To admiration, led by Nature's light;  
 And with the *Gentiles* much thou must converse,  
 Ruling them by persuasion as thou mean'st,  
 Without thir learning how wilt thou with them,  
 Or they with thee hold conversation meet?  
 230 How wilt thou reason with them, how refute  
 Thir Idolisms, Traditions, Paradoxes?  
 Error by his own arms is best evinc't.  
 Look once more e're we leave this specular Mount  
 Westward, much nearer, by Southwest, behold  
 Whereon the *Aegean* shore a City stands  
 Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,  
*Athens* the eye of *Greece*, Mother of Arts  
 And Eloquence, native to famous wits  
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,  
 240 City or Suburban, studios walks and shades;  
 See there the Olive Grove of *Academe*,  
*Plato's* retirement, where the *Attic* Bird  
 Trills her thick-warbl'd notes the summer long,  
 There flowry hill *Hymettus* with the sound  
 Of Bees industrious murmur oft invites  
 To studious musing; there *Ilissus* rous  
 His whispering stream; within the walls then view  
 The Schools of ancient Sages; his who bred  
 Great *Alexander* to subdue the world,

250 *Lyceum*

250 *Lyceum* there, and painted *Stoa* next:  
 There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power  
 Of harmony in tones and numbers hit  
 By voice or hand, and various-measur'd verse,  
*Aolian* charms and *Dorian* Lyric Odes,  
 And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,  
 Blind *Melesigenes* thence *Homer* call'd,  
 Whose Poem *Phaëbus* challeng'd for his own.  
 Thence what the lofty grave Tragoedians taught  
 In *Chorus* or *Iambic*, teachers best  
 260 Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd  
 In brief sententious precepts while they treat  
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life;  
 High actions, and high passions best describing:  
 Thence to the famous Orators repair,  
 Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence  
 Wielded at will that fierce Democratie,  
 Shook the Arsenal and fulmin'd over *Greece*,  
 To *Macedon*, and *Artaxerxes* Throne;  
 To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,  
 270 From Heaven descended to the low-rooft house  
 Of *Socrates*, see there his Tenement,  
 Whom well inspir'd the Oracle pronounc'd  
 Wisest of men; from whose mouth issu'd forth  
 Mellifluous streams that water'd all the Schools  
 Of Academics old and new, with those  
 Sirnam'd *Peripatitics*, and the Sect  
*Epicurean*, and the *Stoic* severe;  
 These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,  
 Till time mature thee to a Kingdom's waight;  
 280 These rules will render thee a King compleat  
 Within thy self, much more with Empire joyn'd.  
 To whom our Saviour sagely thus repli'd.

Think



Think not but that I know these things, or think  
 I know them not; not therefore am I short  
 Of knowing what I aught: he who receives  
 Light from above, from the fountain of light,  
 No other doctrine needs, though granted true;  
 But these are false, or little else but dreams,  
 Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.  
 290 The first and wisest of them all profess'd  
 To know this only, that he nothing knew;  
 The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits,  
 A third sort doubted all things, though plain sence;  
 Others in vertue plac'd felicity,  
 But vertue joyn'd with riches and long life,  
 In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease,  
 The Stoic last in Philosophic pride,  
 By him call'd vertue; and his vertuous man,  
 Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing  
 300 Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,  
 As fearing God nor man, contemning all  
 Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life,  
 Which when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,  
 For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,  
 Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.  
 Alas what can they teach, and not mislead;  
 Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,  
 And how the world began, and how man fell  
 Degraded by himself, on grace depending?  
 310 Much of the Soul they talk, but all awrie,  
 And in themselves seek vertue, and to themselves  
 All glory arrogate, to God give none,  
 Rather accuse him under usual names,  
 Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite  
 Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these

True

True wisdom, finds her not, or by delusion  
 Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,  
 An empty cloud. However many books  
 Wise men have said are wearisome; who reads  
 320 Incessantly, and to his reading brings not  
 A spirit and judgment equal or superior,  
 (And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek)  
 Uncertain and unsettl'd still remains,  
 Deep vers'd in books and shallow in himself,  
 Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,  
 And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;  
 As Children gathering pibles on the shore.  
 Or if I would delight my private hours  
 With Music or with Poem, where so soon  
 330 As in our native Language can I find  
 That solace? All our Law and Story strew'd  
 With Hymns, our Psalms with artfull terms inscrib'd,  
 Our Hebrew Songs and Harps in *Babylon*,  
 That pleas'd so well our Victors ear, declare  
 That rather *Greece* from us these Arts deriv'd;  
 Ill imitated, while they loudest sing  
 The vices of thir Dieties, and thir own  
 In Fable, Hymn, or Song, so personating  
 Thir Gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.  
 340 Remove their swelling Epithetes thick laid  
 As varnish on a Harlots cheek, the rest,  
 Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,  
 Will far be found unworthy to compare  
 With *Sion's* songs, to all true tastes excelling,  
 Where God is prais'd aright, and God-like men,  
 The Holiest of Holies, and his Saints;  
 Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee;  
 Unless where moral vertue is express't

By



By light of Nature not in all quite lost.  
 350 Thir Orators thou then extoll'st, as those  
 The top of Eloquence, Statists indeed,  
 And lovers of thir Country, as may seem;  
 But herein to our Prophets far beneath,  
 As men divinely taught, and better teaching  
 The solid rules of Civil Government  
 In thir Majestic unaffected stile  
 Then all the Oratory of *Greece* and *Rome*.  
 In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,  
 What makes a Nation happy, and keeps it so;  
 360 What ruins Kingdoms, and lays Cities flat;  
 These only with our Law best form a King.  
 So spake the Son of God; but Satan now  
 Quite at a loss, for all his darts were spent,  
 Thus to our Saviour with stern brow repli'd.  
 Since neither wealth, nor honour, arms nor arts,  
 Kingdom nor Empire pleases thee, nor aught  
 By me propos'd in life contemplative,  
 Or active, tended on by glory, or fame,  
 What dost thou in this World? the Wilderness  
 370 For thee is fittest place, I found thee there,  
 And thither will return thee, yet remember  
 What I foretell thee, soon thou shalt have cause  
 To wish thou never hadst rejected thus  
 Nicely or cautiously my offer'd aid,  
 Which would have set thee in short time with ease  
 On *David's* Throne; or Throne of all the world,  
 Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,  
 When Prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.  
 Now contrary, if I read aught in Heaven,  
 380 Or Heav'n write aught of Fate, by what the Stars  
 Voluminous, or single Characters,

In their conjunction met, give me to spell,  
 Sorrows, and labours opposition, hate,  
 Attends thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,  
 Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death,  
 A Kingdom they portend thee, but what Kingdom,  
 Real or Allegoric I discern not,  
 Nor when, eternal sure, as without end,  
 Without beginning; for no date prefixt.  
 390 Directs me in the Starry Rubric set.  
 So saying he took (for still he knew his power  
 Not yet expir'd) and to the Wilderness  
 Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,  
 Feigning to disappear. Darknes now rose,  
 As day-light sunk, and brought in lowring night  
 Her shadowy off-spring unsubstantial both,  
 Privation meer of light and absent day.  
 Our Saviour meek and with untroubl'd mind  
 After his aery jaunt, though hurried sore,  
 400 Hungry and cold betook him to his rest,  
 Wherever, under some concourse of shades  
 Whose branching arms thick interwind might shield  
 From dews and damps of night his shelter'd head,  
 But shelter'd slept in vain, for at his head  
 The Tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams  
 Disturb'd his sleep; and either Tropic now  
 'Gan thunder, and both ends of Heav'n the Clouds  
 From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd  
 Fierce rain with lightning mixt, water with fire  
 410 In ruine reconcil'd: nor slept the winds  
 Within thir stony caves, but rush'd abroad  
 From the four hinges of the world, and fell  
 On the vext Wilderness, whose tallest Pines,  
 Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest Oaks  
 Bow'd



Bow'd their Stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,  
 Or torn up sheer: ill wast thou shrouded then;  
 O patient Son of God, yet only stoodst  
 Unshaken; nor yet staid the terror there,  
 Infernal Ghosts, and Hellish Furies, round  
 420 Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some shriek'd,  
 Some bent at thee thir fiery darts, while thou  
 Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace.  
 Thus pass'd the night so foul till morning fair  
 Came forth with Pilgrim steps in amice gray;  
 Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar  
 Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,  
 And grisly Spectres, which the Fiend had rais'd  
 To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.  
 And now the Sun with more effectual beams  
 430 Had chear'd the face of Earth, and dri'd the wet  
 From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds  
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green,  
 After a night of storm so ruinous,  
 Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray  
 To gratulate the sweet return of morn;  
 Nor yet amidst this joy and brightest morn  
 Was absent, after all his mischief done,  
 The Prince of darkness, glad would also seem  
 Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came,  
 440 Yet with no new device, they all were spent,  
 Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,  
 Desperate of better course, to vent his rage,  
 And mad despight to be so oft repell'd.  
 Him walking on a Sunny hill he found,  
 Back'd on the North and West by a thick wood,  
 Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape;  
 And in a careless mood thus to him said.

Fair

Fair morning yet betides thee Son of God,  
 After a dismal night; I heard the rack  
 As Earth and Sky would mingle; but my self  
 450 Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them  
 As dangerous to the pillard frame of Heaven,  
 Or to the Earths dark basis underneath,  
 Are to the main as inconsiderable,  
 And harmless, if not wholsom, as a sneeze  
 To mans less universe, and soon are gone;  
 Yet as being oft times noxious where they light  
 On man, beast, plant, wastfull and turbulent,  
 Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,  
 460 Over whose heads they rore, and seem to point,  
 They oft fore-signifie and threaten ill:  
 This Tempest at this Disert most was bent;  
 Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.  
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject  
 The perfet season offer'd with my aid  
 To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong  
 All to the push of Fate, persue thy way  
 Of gaining  *Davids*  Throne no man knows when,  
 For both the when and how is no where told,  
 470 Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;  
 For Angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing  
 The time and means: each act is rightliest done,  
 Not when it must, but when it may be best.  
 If thou observe not this, be sure to find,  
 What I foretold thee, many a hard assay  
 Of dangers, and adversities and pains,  
 E're thou of  *Israels*  Scepter get fast hold;  
 Whereof this ominous night that clos'd thee round,  
 So many terrors, voices, prodigies  
 480 May warn thee, as a sure fore-going sign.

E

So



So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on  
And staid not, but in brief him answer'd thus.

Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm  
Those terrors which thou speak'st of, did me none;  
I never fear'd they could, though noising loud  
And threatning nigh; what they can do as signs  
Betok'ning, or ill boding, I contemn  
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;  
Who knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,  
490 Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I accepting  
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,  
Ambitious spirit, and would'st be thought my God  
And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrifie  
Me to thy will; desist, thou art discern'd  
And toil'st in vain, nor me in vain molest.

To whom the Fiend now swoln with rage reply'd  
Then hear, O Son of *David*, Virgin-born;  
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt,  
Of the Messiah I have heard foretold  
500 By all the Prophets; of thy birth at length  
Announc't by *Gabriel* with the first I knew,  
And of the Angelic Song in *Bethlehem* field,  
On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.  
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye  
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,  
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;  
Till at the Ford of *Jordan* whether all  
Flock'd to the Baptist, I among the rest,  
Though not to be Baptiz'd, by voice from Heav'n  
510 Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God belov'd.  
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view  
And narrower Scrutiny, that I might learn  
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd

The Son of God, which bears no single sense;  
The Son of God I also am, or was,  
And if I was, I am; relation stands;  
All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought  
In some respect far higher so declar'd.  
Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,  
520 And follow'd thee still on to this vast wild;  
Where by all best conjectures I collect  
Thou art to be my fatal enemy.  
Good reason then, if I before-hand seek  
To understand my Adversary, who  
And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent,  
By parl, or composition, truce, or league  
To win him, or win from him what I can.  
And opportunity I here have had  
To try thee, sift thee, and confesse have found thee  
530 Proof against all temptation as a rock  
Of Adamant, and as a Centel, firm  
To the utmost of meer man both wise and good,  
Not more; for Honours, Riches, Kingdoms, Glory  
Have been before contemn'd, and may agen:  
Therefore to know what more thou art than man,  
Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heav'n,  
Another method I must now begin.  
So saying he caught him up, and without wing  
Of *Hippogrif* bore through the Air sublime  
540 Over the Wilderness and o're the Plain;  
Till underneath them fair *Jerusalem*,  
The holy City lifted high her Towers,  
And higher yet the glorious Temple rear'd  
Her pile, far off appearing like a Mount  
Of Alabaster, top't with Golden Spires:  
There on the highest Pinnacle he set



The Son of God ; and added thus in scorn :

There stand, if thou wilt stand ; to stand upright  
Will ask thee skill ; I to thy Fathers house

350 Have brought thee, and highest plac't, highest is best,  
Now shew thy Progeny ; if not to stand,

Cast thy self down ; safely if Son of God :

For it is written, He will give command  
Concerning thee to his Angels, in thir hands

They shall up lift thee, lest at any time

Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.

To whom thus Jesus : also it is written,  
Tempt not the Lord thy God, he said and stood.  
But Satan smitten with amazement fell

360 As when Earths Son *Antæus* ( to compare  
Small things with greatest ) in *Irassa* strove  
With *Joves Alcides*, and oft foil'd still rose,  
Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,  
Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joyn'd,  
Throttld at length in the Air, expir'd and fell ;  
So after many a foil the Tempter proud,  
Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride  
Fell whence he stood to see his Victor fall.

And as that *Theban* Monster that propos'd

370 Her riddle, and him, who solv'd it not, devour'd ;

That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spight

Cast her self headlong from th' *Ismenian* steep,

So strook with dread and anguish fell the Fiend,

And to his crew, thar sat consulting, brought

Joyless triumphs of his hop't success,

Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,

Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.

So Satan fell and strait a fiery Globe

Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,

580 Who on their plummy Vans receiv'd him soft

From his uneasie station, and upbore

As on a floating couch through the blithe Air,

Then in a flowry valley set him down

On a green bank, and set before him spread

A table of Celestial Food, Divine,

Ambrosial, fruits fetcht from the Tree of Life,

And from the fount of Life Ambrosial drink,

That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd

What hunger, if aught hunger had impair'd,

590 Or thirst, and as he fed, Angelic Quires

Sung Heavenly Anthems of his victory

Over temptation, and the Tempter proud.

True Image of the Father whether thron'd

In the bosom of blifs, and light of light

Conceiving, or remote from Heaven, enshrin'd

In fleshly Tabernacle, and human form,

Wandering the Wilderness, whatever place,

Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing

The Son of God, with Godlike force indu'd

Against th' Attempter of thy Fathers Throne,

600 And Thief of Paradise ; him long of old

Thou didst debel, and down from Heav'n cast

With all his Army, now thou hast aveng'd

Supplanted *Adam*, and by vanquishing

Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,

And frustrated the conquest fraudulent :

He never more henceforth will dare set foot

In Paradise to tempt ; his snares are broke :

For though that seat of earthly blifs be fail'd,

A fairer Paradise is founded now

610 For *Adam* and his chosen Sons, whom thou

A Saviour art come down to re-install.



70 *Paradise Regain'd.*

Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be  
Of Tempter and temptation without fear.  
But thou, Infernal Serpent, shalt not long  
Rule in the Clouds ; like an Autumnal Star  
Or Lightning thou shalt fall from Heav'n trod down  
Under his feet : for proof, e're this thou feel'st  
Thy wound, yet not thy last and deadliest wound  
By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in Hell  
620 No triumph ; in all her Gates *Abaddon* rues  
Thy bold attempt ; hereafter learn with awe  
To dread the Son of God : he all unarm'd  
Shall chase thee with the terror of his voice  
From thy Demoniac holds, possession foul,  
Thee and thy Legions, yelling they shall flie,  
And beg to hide them in a herd of Swine,  
Lest he command them down into the deep  
Bound, and to torment sent before thir time.  
Hail Son of the most High, heir of both Worlds,  
630 Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work  
Now enter, and begin to save mankind.  
Thus they the Son of God our Saviour meek  
Sung Victor, and from Heavenly Feast refresh'd  
Brought on his way with joy ; he unobserv'd  
Home to his Mothers house private return'd.

*The END.*

# SAMSON AGONISTES.

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

The Author

*JOHN MILTON.*

*Aristot. Poet. Cap. 6.*

*Τραγῳδία μίμνησις περὶ ζῶας ἀνθρώπων, &c.*

*Tragædia est imitatio actionis seriæ, &c. Per misericordiam  
& metum perficiens talium affectuum lustrationem.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for *John Starkey* at the Mitre  
in *Fleet-street*, near *Temple-Bar*.  
MDCLXXX.





Of that sort of Dramatic Poem which  
is call'd Tragedy.

**T**Ragedy, as it was anciently compos'd hath  
been ever held the graveſt, moraleſt, and  
moſt profitable of all other Poems: there-  
fore ſaid by *Ariſtotle* to be of power by raiſing pity  
and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of thoſe and  
ſuch like paſſions, that is, to temper and reduce them  
to juſt meaſure with a kind of delight, ſtirr'd up by  
reading or ſeeing thoſe paſſions well imitated. Nor  
is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good  
his aſſertion: for ſo in Phyſic things of melancolic  
hue and quality are uſ'd againſt melancholy, ſowr  
againſt ſowr, ſalt to remove ſalt humours. Hence  
Philophers and other graveſt Writers, as *Cicero*,  
*Plutarch* and others, frequently cite out of Tragic  
Poets, both to adorn and illuſtrate their diſcourſe.  
The Apoſtle *Paul* himſelf thought it not unworthy  
to inſert a verſe of *Euripides* into the Text of Holy  
Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 15. 33. and *Paraeus* commenting  
on the *Revelation*, divides the whole Book as a Tra-  
gedy, into Acts diſtingiſht each by a Chorus of  
Heavenly Harpings and Song between. Hereto-  
fore



fore Men in highest dignity have labour'd not a little to be thought able to compose a Tragedy. Of that honour *Dionysius* the elder was no less ambitious, than before of his attaining to the Tyranny. *Augustus Cæsar* also had begun his *Ajax*, but unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinished. *Seneca* the Philosopher is by some thought the Author of those Tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. *Gregory, Nazianzen* a Father of the Church, thought it not unbeseeming the sanctity of his person to write a Tragedy, which he entitl'd, *Christ suffering*. This is mention'd to vindicate Tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day with other common Interludes; hap'ning through the Poets error of intermixing Comic stuff with Tragic sadness and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar persons, which by all judicious hath been counted absurd; and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratifie the people. And though ancient Tragedy use no Prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self defence, or explanation, that which *Martial* calls an Epistle; in behalf of this Tragedy coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much before-hand may be Epistl'd; that *Chorus* is here introduc'd after the Greek manner, not ancient only but modern, and still in use among the *Italians*. In the modelling there-

therefore of this Poem, with good reason, the Ancients and *Italians* are rather follow'd, as of much more Authority and fame. The measure of Verse us'd in the Chorus is of all sorts, call'd by the Greeks *Monostrophic*, or rather *Apolelymenon*, without regard had to *Strophe*, *Antistrophe* or *Epod*, which were a kind of Stanza's fram'd only for the Music, then us'd with the Chorus that sung; not essential to the Poem, and therefore not material; or being divided into Stanza's or Pauses, they may be call'd *Allæostropha*. Division into Act and Scene referring chiefly to the Stage (to which this work never was intended) is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole Drama be found not produc't beyond the fifth Act, of the stile and uniformity, and that commonly call'd the Plot, whether intricate or explicit, which is nothing indeed but such œconomy, or disposition of the fable as may stand best with verisimilitude and decorum; they only will best judge who are not unacquainted with *Æschulus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, the three Tragic Poets unequall'd yet by any, and the best rule to all who endeavour to write Tragedy. The circumscription of time wherein the whole Drama begins and ends, is according to ancient rule, and best example, within the space of 24 hours.

The



## The ARGUMENT.

**S**amson made Captive, Blind, and now in the Prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common work-house, on a Festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open Air, to a place nigh, somewhat retir'd there to sit a while and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old Father Manoa, who endeavours the like, and withall tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this Feast was proclaim'd by the Philistins as a day of Thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoa then departs to prosecute his indeavour with the Philistian Lords for Samson's redemption; who in the mean while is visited by other persons; and lastly by a publick Officer to require his coming to the Feast before the Lords and People, to play or shew his strength in their presence; he at first refuses, dismissing the publick Officer with absolute denial to come; at length persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatnings to fetch him; the Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoa returns full of joyfull hope, to procure ere long his Sons deliverance: in the midst of which discourse an Ebrew comes in haste confusedly at first; and afterward more distinctly relating the Catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistins, and by accident to himself; where with the Tragedy ends.

The



## The Persons.

Samson.

Manoa the Father of Samson.

Dalila his Wife.

Harapha of Gath.

Publick Officer.

Messenger.

Chorus of Danites.

The Scene before the Prison in Gaza.

Samson





# SAMSON

## AGONISTES.

*Samf.* **A** Little onward lend thy guiding hand  
 To these dark steps, a little further on;  
 For yonder bank hath choice of Sun or shade,  
 There I am wont to sit, when any chance  
 Relieves me from my task of servile toyl,  
 Daily in the common Prison else enjoyn'd me,  
 Where I a Prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw  
 The air imprison'd also, close and damp,  
 Unwholsom draught: but here I feel amends,  
<sup>10</sup> The breath of Heav'n fresh-blowing, pure and sweet,  
 With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.  
 This day a solemn Feast the people hold  
 To *Dagon* their Sea-Idol, and forbid  
 Laborious works, unwillingly this rest  
 Their Superstition yields me; hence with leave  
 Retiring from the popular noise, I seek  
 This unfrequented place to find some ease,  
 Ease to the body some, none to the mind  
 From restless thoughts, that like a deadly swarm  
 Of Hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone,  
 But rush upon me thronging, and present

Times



Times past, what once I was, and what am now,  
 O wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold  
 Twice by an Angel, who at last in fight  
 Of both my Parents all in flames ascended  
 From off the Altar, where an Off'ring burn'd,  
 As in a fiery column charioting  
 His Godlike presence, and from some great act  
 Or benefit reveal'd to *Abraham's* race?  
 30 Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd  
 As of a person separate to God,  
 Design'd for great exploits; if I must die  
 Betray'd, Captiv'd, and both my Eyes put out,  
 Made of my Enemies the scorn and gaze;  
 To grind in Brazen Fetters under task  
 With this Heav'n-gifted strength? O glorious strength  
 Put to the labour of a Beast, debas'd  
 Lower than bondslave! Promise was that I  
 Should *Israel* from *Philistian* yoke deliver;  
 40 Ask for this great Deliverer now, and find him  
 Eyeless in *Gaza* at the Mill with slaves,  
 Himself in bonds under *Philistian* yoke;  
 Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt  
 Divine Prediction; what if all foretold  
 Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,  
 Whom have I to complain of but my self?  
 Who this high gift of strength committed to me,  
 In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,  
 Under the Seal of silence could not keep,  
 50 But weakly to a woman must reveal it,  
 O'come with importunity and tears.  
 O impotence of mind, in body strong!  
 But what is strength without a double share  
 Of wisdom, vast, unwieldy, burdensom,

Proudly

Proudly secure, yet liable to fall  
 By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,  
 But to subserve where wisdom bears command.  
 God, when he gave me strength, to shew withal  
 How slight the gift was, hung it in my Hair.  
 60 But Peace, I must not quarrel with the will  
 Of highest dispensation, which herein  
 Happ'ly had ends above my reach to know:  
 Suffices that to me strength is my bane,  
 And proves the source of all my miseries;  
 So many, and so huge, that each apart  
 Would ask a life to wail, but chief of all,  
 O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!  
 Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,  
 70 Dungeon, or beggery, decrepit age!  
 Light the prime work of God to me is extinct,  
 And all her various objects of delight  
 Annul'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd.  
 Inferiour to the vilest now become  
 Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me,  
 They creep, yet see, I dark in light expos'd  
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,  
 Within doors, or without, still as a fool,  
 In power of others, never in my own;  
 80 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.  
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,  
 Irrecoverably dark, total Eclipse  
 Without all hope of day!  
 O first created Beam, and thou great Word,  
 Let there be light, and light was over all;  
 Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?  
 The Sun to me is dark  
 And silent as the Moon,

F

When



When she deserts the night  
 90 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.  
 Since light so necessary is to life,  
 And almost life it self, if it be true  
 That light is in the Soul,  
 She all in every part; why was the fight  
 To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd?  
 So obvious and so easie to be quench't,  
 And not as feeling through all parts diffus'd,  
 That she might look at will through every pore?  
 Then had I not been thus exil'd from light;  
 100 As in the land of darkness yet in light,  
 To live a life half dead, a living death,  
 And buried; but O yet more miserable?  
 My self, my Sepulcher, a moving Grave,  
 Buried, yet not exempt  
 By privilege of death and burial  
 From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs,  
 But made hereby obnoxious more  
 To all the miseries of life,  
 Life in captivity  
 110 Among inhuman foes.  
 But who are these? for with joint pace I hear  
 The tread of many feet steering this way;  
 Perhaps my enemies who come to stare  
 At my affliction, and perhaps to insult,  
 Their daily practice to afflict me more.  
*Chor.* This, this is he; softly a while,  
 Let us not break in upon him;  
 O change beyond report, thought, or belief!  
 See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,  
 120 With languish't head unpropt,  
 As one past hope, abandon'd,

And by himself given over;  
 In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds  
 O're worn and solid;  
 Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,  
 That Heroic, that Renown'd,  
 Irresistable *Samson*? whom unarm'd (withstand;  
 No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast could  
 Who tore the Lion, as the Lion tears the Kid,  
 130 Ran on embattel'd Armies clad in Iron,  
 And weaponless himself,  
 Made Arms ridiculous, useless the forgery  
 Of brazen Shield and Spear, the hammer'd Cuirass,  
*Chalybean* temper'd steel, and frock of mail  
 Adamantean Proof;  
 But safest he who stood aloof,  
 When insupportably his foot advanc't,  
 In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,  
 Spurn'd them to death by Troops. The bold *Asca-*  
 140 Fled from his Lion ramp, old Warriors turn'd *(lonite*  
 Their plated backs under his heel;  
 Or growling soil'd their crested helmets in the dust.  
 Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,  
 The Jaw of a dead Ass, his sword of bone,  
 A thousand fore-skins fell, the flower of *Palestin*  
 In *Ramath-lechi* famous to this day:  
 Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders  
 The Gates of *Azza*, Post, and massie Bar (bore  
 Up to the Hill by *Hebron*, seat of Giants old,  
 150 No journey of a Sabbath-day, and loaded so;  
 Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heav'n.  
 Which shall I first bewail,  
 Thy Bondage or lost Sight,  
 Prison within Prison



Inseparably dark?

Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)

The Dungeon of thy self; thy Soul

(Which Men enjoying fight oft without cause com  
Imprison'd now indeed, (plain

160 In real darkness of the body dwells,

Shut up from outward light

To incorporate with gloomy night;

For inward light alas

Puts forth no visual beam.

O mirror of our fickle state,

Since man on earth unparallel'd?

The rarer thy example stands,

By how much from the top of wondrous glory,

Strongest of mortal men,

170 To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.

For him I reckon not in high estate

Whom long descent of birth

Or the sphear of Fortune raises;

But thee whose strength, while vertue was her mate,

Might have subdu'd the Earth,

Universally crown'd with highest praises.

Sam. I hear the sound of words, their sence the air  
Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear. (might

Chor. He speak, let us draw nigh. Matchless in

180 The glory late of *Israel*, now the grief,

We come thy friends and neighbours not unknown

From *Eshtaol* and *Zora's* fruitful Vale

To visit or bewail thee, or if better,

Counsel or Consolation we may bring,

Salve to thy Sores, apt words have power to swage

The tumors of a troubl'd mind,

And are as Balm to fester'd wounds.

Sam. Your coming, Friends, revives me, for I learn

Now of my own experience, not by talk,

How counterfeit a coin they are who friends

Bear in their Superfcription (of the most

I would be understood) in prosperous days

They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head

Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O friends,

How many evils have enclos'd me round;

Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,

Blindness, for had I sight, confus'd with shame,

How could I once look up, or heave the head,

Who like a foolish Pilot have shipwreck't,

200 My Vessel trusted to me from above,

Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a tear,

Fool, have divulg'd the secret gift of God

To a deceitful Woman: tell me Friends,

Am I not sung and proverb'd for a Fool

In every street, do they not say, how well

Are come upon him his deserts? yet why?

Immeasurable strength they might behold

In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;

This with the other should, at least, have pair'd,

210 These two proportion'd ill drove me transverse.

Chor. Tax not divine disposal wisest Men

Have err'd, and by bad Women been deceived;

And shall again, pretend they ne're so wise.

Deject not then so overmuch thy self,

Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides;

Yet truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder

Why thou shouldst wed *Philistian* Woman rather

Than of thine own Tribe fairer, or as fair,

At least of thy own Nation, and as noble.

220 Sam. The first I saw at *Timna*, and she pleas'd



Me, not my Parents, that I sought to wed,  
 The daughter of an Infidel: they knew not  
 That what I mention'd was of God; I knew  
 From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd  
 The Marriage on; that by occasion hence  
 I might begin *Israel's* Deliverance,  
 The work to which I was divinely call'd;  
 She proving false, the next I took to Wife  
 (O that I never had! fond wish too late.)  
 230 Was in the Vale of *Sorec*, *Dalila*,  
 That specious Monster, my accomplisht snare.  
 I thought it lawfull from my former act,  
 And the same end; still watching to oppress  
*Israel's* oppressours: of what now I suffer  
 She was not the prime cause, but I my self,  
 Who vanquisht with a peal of words (O weakness!)  
 Gave up my fort of silence to a Woman.

*Chor.* In seeking just occasion to provoke  
 The *Philistine*, thy Countries Enemy,  
 240 Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness:  
 Yet *Israel* still serves with all his Sons.

*Sam.* That fault I take not on me, but transfer  
 On *Israel's* Governours, and Heads of Tribes,  
 Who seeing those great acts which God had done  
 Singly by me against their Conquerours  
 Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd  
 Deliverance offer'd: I on the other side  
 Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds, (doer)  
 The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the  
 250 But they persisted deaf, and would not seem  
 To count them things worth notice, till at length  
 Their Lords the *Philistines* with gather'd powers  
 Enter'd *Judea* seeking me, who then

Safe to the rock of *Etham* was retir'd,  
 Not flying, but fore-casting in what place  
 To set upon them what advantag'd best;  
 Mean while the men of *Judab* to prevent  
 The harrafs of their Land beset me round;  
 I willingly on some conditions came  
 Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me  
 260 To the uncircumcis'd a welcom prey,  
 Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threds  
 Toucht with the flame: on their whole Host I flew  
 Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd  
 Their choicest youth; they only liv'd who fled.  
 Had *Judab* that day join'd, or one whole Tribe,  
 They had by this possess'd the Towers of *Gath*,  
 And lorded over them whom now they serve;  
 But what more oft in Nations grown corrupt,  
 270 And by their vices brought to servitude,  
 Than to love Bondage more than Liberty,  
 Bondage with ease then strenuous liberty;  
 And to despise, or envy, or suspect  
 Whom God hath of his special favour rais'd  
 As their Deliverer; if he aught begin,  
 How frequent to desert him, and at last  
 To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?

*Cho.* Thy words to my remembrance bring  
 How *Succoth* and the Fort of *Penuel*  
 280 Their great Deliverer contemn'd,  
 The matchless *Gideon* in pursuit  
 Of *Madian* and her vanquisht Kings:  
 And how ingrateful *Ephraim*  
 Had dealt with *Jephtha*, who by argument,  
 Not worse than by his shield and spear  
 Defended *Israel* from the *Ammonite*,



Had not his prowess quell'd their pride  
In that sore battel when so many dy'd  
Without Reprieve adjudg'd to death,

290 For want of well pronouncing *Shibboleth*.

*Sam.* Of such examples add me to the roul,  
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,  
But Gods propos'd deliverance not so.

*Chor.* Just are the ways of God,  
And justifiable to Men;  
Unless there be who think not God at all,  
If any be, they walk obscure;  
For of such Doctrine never was there School,  
But the heart of the Fool,

300 And no man therein Doctor but himself.

Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,  
As to his own edicts, found contradicting,  
Then give the reins to wandring thought,  
Regardless of his glories diminution;  
Till by their own perplexities involv'd  
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,

But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine th' interminable,  
And tie him to his own prescript,

310 Who made our Laws to bind us, not himself,

And hath full right to exempt  
Whom so it pleases him by choice  
From National obstriction, without taint  
Of sin, or legal debt;

For with his own Laws he can best dispence.

He would not else who never wanted means,  
Nor in respect of the enemy just cause  
To set his people free,

Have prompted this Heroic *Nazarite*,

Against

320 Against his vow of strictest purity,  
To seek in marriage that fallacious Bride,  
Unclean, unchaste.

Down Reason then, at least vain reasonings down,  
Though Reason here aver  
That moral verdit quits her of unclean:  
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.

But see here comes thy reverend Sire  
With careful step, Locks white as downe,  
Old *Manoah*: advise

330 Forthwith how thou oughtst to receive him.

*Sam.* Ay me, another inward grief awak't  
With mention of that name renews th' assault.

*Man.* Brethren and men of *Dan*, for such ye seem,  
Though in this uncouth place; if old respect,  
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,  
My Son now Captive, hither hath inform'd  
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age  
Came lagging after; say if he be here.

*Chor.* As signal now in low dejected state,

340 As earst in highest, behold him where he lies.

*Man.* O miserable change! is this the man,  
That invincible *Samson*, far renown'd  
The dread of *Israel's* foes, who with a strength  
Equivalent to Angels walk'd their streets,  
None offering fight; who single combatant  
Duell'd their Armies rank't in proud array,  
Himself an Army, now unequal match  
To save himself against a coward arm'd  
At one spears length. O ever failing trust

350 In mortal strength! and oh what not in man  
Deceivable and vain! Nay what thing good  
Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane?

I pray'd



I pray'd for Children, and thought barrenness  
 In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a Son,  
 Such a Son as all men hail'd me happy;  
 Who would be now a Father in my stead?  
 O wherefore did God grant me my request,  
 And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd?  
 Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt  
 360 Our earnest Prayers, then giv'n with solemn hand  
 As Graces, draw a Scorpions tail behind?  
 For this did the Angel twice descend? for this  
 Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a Plant;  
 Select, and Sacred, Glorious for a while,  
 The miracle of men: then in an hour  
 Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound,  
 Thy Foes derision, Captive, Poor, and Blind  
 Into a Dungeon thrust, to work with Slaves?  
 Alas methinks whom God hath chosen once  
 370 To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,  
 He should not so o'rewhelm, and as a thrall  
 Subject him to so foul indignities,  
 Be it but for honours sake of former deeds.

*Sam.* Appoint not heavenly disposition, Father,  
 Nothing of all these evils hath befall'n me  
 But justly; I my self have brought them on,  
 Sole Author I, sole cause: if aught seem vile,  
 As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd  
 The mystery of God giv'n me under pledge  
 380 Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,  
 A *Canaanite*, my faithless enemy.  
 This well I knew, nor was at all surpris'd,  
 But warn'd by oft experience: did not she  
 Of *Timna* first betray me, and reveal  
 The secret wrested from me in her highth

Of

Of Nuptial love profess, carrying it strait  
 To them who had corrupted her, my Spies,  
 And Rivals? In this other was there found  
 More Faith? who also in her prime of love,  
 390 Spousal embraces, vitiated with Gold,  
 Though offer'd only, by the sent conceiv'd  
 Her spurious first-born; Treason against me?  
 Thrice she assay'd with flattering prayers and sighs,  
 And amorous reproaches to win from me  
 My capital secret, in what part my strength  
 Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might know:  
 Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport  
 Her importunity, each time perceiving  
 How openly, and with what impudence  
 400 She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse  
 Than undissembl'd hate) with what contempt  
 She sought to make me Traytor to my self;  
 Yet the fourth time, when mustering all her wiles,  
 With blandisht parlies, feminine assaults,  
 Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not day nor night  
 To storm me over-watch't, and wearied out.  
 At times when men seek most repose and rest,  
 I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,  
 Who with a grain of manhood well resolv'd  
 410 Might easily have shook off all her snares:  
 But foul effeminacy held me yok't  
 Her Bond-slave; O indignity, O blot  
 To Honour and Religion! servil mind  
 Rewarded well with servil punishment!  
 The base degree to which I now am fall'n,  
 These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base  
 As was my former servitude, ignoble,  
 Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,

True



True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,  
 420 That saw not how degeneratly I serv'd.

*Man.* I cannot praise thy Marriage choises, Son,  
 Rather approv'd them not; but thou didst plead  
 Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st  
 Find some occasion to infest our Foes.  
 I state not that; this I am sure our Foes.  
 Found soon occasion thereby to make thee  
 Thir Captive, and thir triumph; thou the sooner  
 Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms  
 To violate the sacred trust of silence  
 430 Deposited within thee; which to have kept  
 Tacit, was in thy power; true; and thou bear'st  
 Enough, and more the burden of that fault;  
 Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying  
 That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains,  
 This day the *Philistines* a popular Feast  
 Here celebrate in *Gaza*; and proclaim  
 Great Pomp, and Sacrifice, and Praises loud  
 To *Dagon*, as their God who hath deliver'd  
 Thee *Samson* bound and blind into thir hands,  
 440 Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.  
 So *Dagon* shall be magnifi'd, and God,  
 Besides whom is no God, compar'd with Idols,  
 Disglorifi'd, blasphem'd, and had in scorn  
 By th' Idolatrous rout amidst their wine;  
 Which to have come to pass by means of thee,  
*Samson*, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,  
 Of all reproach the most with shame that ever  
 Could have befall'n thee and thy Fathers house.  
*Sam.* Father, I do acknowledge and confess  
 450 That I this honour, I this pomp have brought  
 To *Dagon*, and advanc'd his praises high

Among

Among the Heathen round; to God have brought  
 Dishonour, obloquy, and op't the mouths  
 Of Idolists, and Atheists; have brought scandal  
 To *Israel*, diffidence of God, and doubt  
 In feeble hearts, propense anough before  
 To waver, or fall off and joyn with idols;  
 Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,  
 The anguish of my Soul, that suffers not  
 460 Mine eye to harbor sleep, or thoughts to rest.  
 This only hope relieves me, that the strife  
 With me hath end; all the contest is now  
 'Twixt God and *Dagon*; *Dagon* hath presum'd,  
 Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,  
 His Deity comparing and preferring  
 Before the God of *Abraham*. He, be sure,  
 Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,  
 But will arise and his great name assert:  
*Dagon* must stoop, and shall e're long receive  
 470 Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him  
 Of all these boasted Trophies won on me,  
 And with confusion blank his Worshipers.

*Man.* With cause this hope relieves thee, and these  
 I as a Prophecy receive: for God, (words  
 Nothing more certain will not long defer  
 To vindicate the glory of his name  
 Against all competition, nor will long  
 Endure it, doubtfull whether God be Lord,  
 Or *Dagon*. But for thee what shall be done?  
 480 Thou must not in the mean while here forget  
 Lie in this miserable loathsom plight  
 Neglected. I already have made way  
 To some *Philistian* Lords, with whom to treat  
 About thy ransom: well they may by this

Have



Have satisfi'd thir utmost of revenge  
By pains and flaveries, worse than death inflicted  
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

*Sam.* Spare that proposal, Father, spare the trouble  
Of that solicitation; let me here,  
490 As I deserve, pay on my punishment;  
And expiate, if possible, my crime,  
Shamefull garrulity. To have reveal'd  
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,  
How hainous had the fact been, how deserving  
Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded  
All friendship and avoided as a blab,  
The mark of fool set on his front?  
But I Gods counsel have not kept, his holy secret  
Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,  
500 Weakly at least, and shamefully: A sin  
That *Gentiles* in thir Parables condemn  
To thir abyss and horrid pains confin'd.

*Man.* Be penitent and for thy fault contrite;  
But act not in thy own affliction, Son,  
Repent the sin, but if the punishment  
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;  
Or th' execution leave to high disposal,  
And let another hand, not thine, exact  
Thy penal forfeit from thy self; perhaps  
510 God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;  
Who evermore approves and more accepts  
(Best pleas'd with humble and filial submission)  
Him who imploring mercy sues for life,  
Then who self-rigorous chooses death as due;  
Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd  
For self-offence, more than for God offended.  
Reject not then what offer'd means, who knows

But

But God hath set before us, to return thee  
Home to thy countrey and his sacred house,  
520 Where thou mayst bring thy off'rings, to avert  
His further ire, with prayers and vows renew'd.

*Sam.* His pardon I implore; but as for life,  
To what end should I seek it? when in strength  
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes  
With youthfull courage and magnanimous thoughts  
Of birth from Heav'n foretold and high exploits,  
Full of divine instinct, after some proof  
Of Acts indeed heroic, far beyond  
The Sons of *Anac*, famous now and blaz'd,  
530 Fearless of danger, like a petty God  
I walk'd about admir'd of all and dreaded  
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.  
Then swoll'n with pride into the snare I fell  
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,  
Softn'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;  
At length to lay my head and hollow pledge  
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap  
Of a deceitfull Concubine who shore me  
Like a tame Weather, all my precious fleece,  
540 Then turn'd me out ridiculous, dispoil'd,  
Shaven, and disarm'd among mine enemies.

*Chor.* Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,  
Which many a famous Warriour overturns,  
Thou couldst repress, nor did the dancing Ruby  
Sparkling, out-pow'r'd, the flavor or the smell,  
Or taste that cheers the hearts of Gods or Men,  
Allure thee from the cool Chrystalline stream.

*Sam.* Where ever fountain or fresh current flow'd  
Against the Eastern ray, translucent, pure,  
550 With touch ætherial of Heav'n's fiery rod

I



I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying  
Thirst, and refresht; nor envy'd them the grape  
Whole heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

*Chor.* O madness, to think use of strongest wines  
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,  
When God with these forbidd'n made choice to rear  
His mighty Champion, strong above compare,  
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

*Sam.* But what avail'd this temperance, not compleat  
560 Against another object more enticing?

What boots it at one gate to make defence,  
And at another to let in the foe  
Effeminatly vanquish't? by which means,  
Now blind, disheartn'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd,  
To what can I be usefull, wherein serve  
My Nation, and the work from Heaven impos'd,  
But to sit idle on the household hearth,  
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,  
Or pitied object, these redundant locks  
570 Robustious to no purpose clustring down,  
Vain monument of strength; till length of years  
And sedentary numness craze my limbs  
To a contemptible old age obscure.  
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,  
Till vermin or the draff of servile food  
Consume me, and oft-invoked death  
Hast'n the welcom end of all my pains.

*Man.* Wilt thou then serve the *Philistines* with that  
Which was expressly giv'n thee to annoy them? (gift  
580 Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,  
Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age out-worn.  
But God who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer  
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay  
After

After the brunt of battel, can as easie  
Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,  
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast;  
And I perswade me so; why else this strength  
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?  
His might continues in thee not for naught,  
590 Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

*Sam.* All otherwise to me my thoughts portend,  
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,  
Nor th' other light of life continue long,  
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:  
So much I feel my genial spirits droop,  
My hopes all flat, nature within me seems  
In all her functions weary of herself;  
My race of glory run, and race of shame,  
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

600 *Man.* Believe not these suggestions which proceed  
From anguish of the mind and humours black,  
That mingle with thy fancy. I however  
Must not omit a Fathers timely care  
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance  
By ransom, or how else: mean while be calm,  
And healing words from these thy friends admit.

*Sam.* O that torment should not be confin'd  
To the bodies wounds and sores,  
With maladies innumerable  
610 In heart, head, brest, and reins;  
But must secret passage find  
To th' inmost mind,  
There exercise all his fierce accidents,  
And on her purest spirits prey,  
As on entrails, joints, and limbs  
With answerable pains, but more intense,  
Though



Though void of corporal sense.  
My griefs not only pain me  
As a lingring disease,

620 But finding no redress, ferment and rage,  
Nor less than wounds immedicable  
Ranckle, and fester, and gangrene,  
To black mortification.  
Thoughts my Tormenters arm'd with deadly stings  
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,  
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise  
Dire inflammation which no cooling herb  
Or medicinal liquor can assuage,  
Nor breath of Vernal Air from snowy Alp.  
630 Sleep hath forsook and giv'n me o're  
To death's benumbing Opium as my only cure.  
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,  
And sense of Heav'n's desertion.

I was his nursing once, and choice delight,  
His destin'd from the womb,  
Promis'd by Heavenly message twice descending.  
Under his special eye  
Abstemious I grew up and thriv'd amain;  
He led me on to mightiest deeds  
640 Above the nerve of mortal arm  
Against the uncircumcis'd, our enemies.  
But now hath cast me off as never known,  
And to those cruel enemies,  
Whom I by his appointment had provok't,  
Left me all helpless with th' irreparable loss  
Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated  
The subject of thir cruelty or scorn.  
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;  
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless;

650 This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,  
No long petition, speedy death,  
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

*Chor.* Many are the sayings of the wise  
In ancient and in modern books enroll'd;  
Extolling Patience as the truest fortitude;  
And to the bearing well of all calamities,  
All chances incident to mans frail life.  
Consolatories writ

With studied argument, and much perswasion sought  
660 Lenient of grief and anxious thought,  
But to th' afflicted in his pangs thir sound  
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune,  
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint,  
Unless he feel within  
Some source of consolation from above;  
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,  
And fainting spirits uphold.

God of our Fathers, what is man!  
That thou towards him with hand so various,  
670 Or might I say contrarious,  
Temperst thy providence through his short course,  
Not evenly, as thou rul'st  
The Angelic orders and inferior creatures mute,  
Irrational and brute.  
Nor do I name of men the common rout,  
That wandring loose about,  
Grow up and perish, as the summer flie,  
Heads without name no more rememberd,  
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,  
680 With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd  
To some great work, thy glory,  
And peoples safety, which in part they effect:



Yet toward these thus dignifi'd, thou oft  
Amidst thir highth of noon,  
Changeest thy countenance, and thy hand with no re  
Of highest favours past  
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit  
To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismissal,  
620 But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them  
Unseemly falls in human eye,  
Too grievous for the trespass or omission,  
Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword  
Of Heathen and prophane, their carkasses  
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd:  
Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,  
And condemnation of the ingrateful multitude.  
If these they scape, perhaps in poverty  
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,  
700 Painful diseases and deform'd,

In crude old age;  
Though not disordinate, yet causless suffering  
The punishment of dissolute days, in fine,  
Just or unjust, alike seem miserable,  
For oft alike, both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious Champion  
The Image of thy strength, and mighty minister.  
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already?  
710 Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn  
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of Sea or Land?  
Female of sex it seems,  
That so bedeckt, ornate, and gay,  
Comes this way sailing  
Like a stately Ship

Of *Tarsus*, bound for th' Isles

Of *Javan* or *Gadier*

With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,  
Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,  
Court'd by all the winds that hold them play,  
An Amber scent of odorous perfume  
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;  
Some rich *Philistian* Matron she may seem,  
And now at nearer view, no other certain  
Than *Dalila* thy wife.

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*Sam.* My Wife, my Traytress, let her not come

*Cho.* Yet on she moves, now stands and eies thee fixt,  
About t' have spoke, but now, with head declin'd  
Like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew, she weeps  
And words address seem into tears dissolv'd,  
Wetting the borders of her silk'n veil:  
But now again she makes address to speak.

*Dal.* With doubtful feet and wavering resolution  
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, *Samson*,  
Which to have merited, without excuse,  
I cannot but acknowledge; yet if tears  
May expiate (though the fact more evil drew  
In the perverse event than I foresaw)  
My penance hath not slack'n'd, though my pardon  
No way assur'd. But conjugal affection  
Prevailing over fear, and timorous doubt  
Hath led me on desirous to behold  
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate.  
If aught in my ability may serve  
To light'n what thou suffer'st, and appease  
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,  
Though late, yet in some part to recompense  
My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

G 3

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Though late, yet in some part to recompense  
My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.



*Sam.* Out, out *Hyæna*; these are thy wonted arts,  
 750 And arts of every woman false like thee,  
 To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,  
 Then as repentant to submit, beseech,  
 And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,  
 Confess, and promise wonders in her change,  
 Not truly penitent, but chief to try  
 Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,  
 His virtue or weakness which way to assail:  
 Then with more cautious and instructed skill  
 Again transgresses, and again submits;  
 760 That wisest and best men full oft beguil'd  
 With goodness principl'd not to reject  
 The penitent, but ever to forgive,  
 Are drawn to wear out miserable days,  
 Entangl'd with a poysonous bosom snake,  
 If not by quick destruction soon cut off  
 As I by thee, to Ages an example.

*Dal.* Yet hear me, *Samson*; not that I endeavour  
 To lessen or extenuate my offence,  
 But that on th' other side if it be weigh'd  
 770 By it self, with aggravations not surcharg'd,  
 Or else with just allowance counterpois'd,  
 I may, if possible, thy pardon find  
 The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.  
 First granting, as I do, it was a weakness  
 In me, but incident to all our sex,  
 Curiosity, inquisitive, importune  
 Of secrets, then with like infirmity  
 To publish them, both common female faults;  
 780 Was it not weakness also to make known  
 For importunity, that is, for naught,  
 Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?

To what I did thou shew'dst me first the way.  
 But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not.  
 Nor shouldst thou have trusted that to womans frailty  
 E're I to thee, thou to thy self wast cruel.  
 Let weakness then with weakness come to parl  
 So near related, or the same of kind,  
 Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine  
 790 The gentler, if severely thou exact not  
 More strength from me, than in thy self was found.  
 And what if Love, which thou interpret'st hate,  
 The jealousy of Love, powerful of sway  
 In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,  
 Caus'd what I did? I saw thee mutable  
 Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou wouldst leave me  
 As her at *Timna*, sought by all means therefore  
 How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:  
 No better way I saw than by importuning  
 800 To learn thy secrets, get into my power  
 Thy key of strength and safety: thou wilt say,  
 Why then reveal'd? I was assur'd by those  
 Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd  
 Against thee but safe custody, and hold:  
 That made for me, I knew that liberty  
 Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,  
 While I at home sat full of cares and fears  
 Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed;  
 Here I should still enjoy thee day and night  
 Mine and Loves prisoner, not the *Philistines*,  
 810 Whole to my self, unhazarded abroad,  
 Fearless at home of partners in my love.  
 These reasons in Loves law have past for good,  
 Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps;  
 And Love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much wo,  
 Yet



Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.  
Be not unlike all others, not austere  
As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.  
If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,  
In uncompassionate anger do not so.

820 *Sam.* How cunningly the forferers displays  
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine?  
That malice not repentance brought thee hither,  
By this appears: I gave, thou say'st, th' example,  
I led the way; bitter reproach, but true,  
I to my self was false e're thou to me,  
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,  
Take to thy wicked deed: which when thou see'st  
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,  
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather  
830 Confess it feign'd, weakness is thy excuse,  
And I believe it, weakness to resist  
*Philistian* gold: if weakness may excuse,  
What Murtherer, what Traytor, Parricide,  
Incestuous, Sacrilegious, but may plead it?  
All wickedness is weakness: that plea therefore  
With God or Man will gain thee no remission.  
But Love constrain'd thee; call it furious rage  
To satisfy thy lust: Love seeks to have Love;  
My love how couldst thou hope, who tookst the way  
840 To raise in me inexpiable hate,  
Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd?  
In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,  
Or by evasions thy crime uncoverst more.

*Dal.* Since thou determinst weakness for no plea  
In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,  
Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,  
What sieges girt me round, e're I consented;  
Which

Which might have aw'd the best resolv'd of men,  
The constantest, to have yielded without blame.  
850 It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,  
That wrought with me: thou know'st the Magistrates  
And Princes of my countrey came in person,  
Solicited, commanded, threatn'd, urg'd,  
Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil Duty  
And of Religion, press'd how just it was,  
How honourable, how glorious to entrap  
A common enemy, who had destroy'd  
Such numbers of our Nation: and the Priest  
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,  
860 Preaching how meritorious with the gods  
It would be to ensnare an irreligious  
Dishonourer of *Dagon*: what had I  
To oppose against such powerful arguments?  
Only my love of thee held long debate;  
And combated in silence all these reasons  
With hard contest: at length that ground'd maxim  
So rise and celebrated in the mouths  
Of wisest men; that to the public good  
870 Private respects must yield; with grave authority  
Took full possession of me and prevail'd;  
Vertue, as I thought, truth, duty so enjoyning.

*Sam.* I thought where all thy circling wiles would  
In feign'd Religion, smooth hypocrisie. (end;  
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,  
Bin, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee  
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.  
I before all the daughters of my Tribe  
And of my Nation chose thee from among  
880 My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st,  
Too well, unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,

Not



Not out of levity, but over-powr'd  
 By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;  
 Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then  
 Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband?  
 Then, as since then, thy countries foe profest:  
 Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave  
 Parents and countrey; nor was I their subject,  
 Nor under their protection but my own,  
 Thou mine, not theirs: if aught against my life  
 890 Thy countrey sought of thee, it sought unjustly,  
 Against the law of nature, law of nations,  
 No more thy countrey, but an impious crew  
 Of men conspiring to uphold thir state  
 By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends  
 For which our countrey is a name so dear;  
 Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee;  
 To please thy gods thou didst it; gods unable  
 To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes  
 But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction  
 900 Of their own deity, Gods cannot be:  
 Less therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd,  
 These false pretexes and varnish'd colours failing,  
 Bare in thy guilt how foul must thou appear?  
*Dal.* In argument with men a woman ever  
 Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.  
*Sam.* For want of words no doubt, or lack of  
 Witness when I was worried with thy peals. (breath,  
*Dal.* I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken  
 In what I thought would have succeeded best.  
 910 Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, *Samson*,  
 Afford me place to shew what recompence  
 Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,  
 Misguided; only what remains past cure

Bear

Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist  
 To afflict thy self in vain: though sight be lost,  
 Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd  
 Where other senses want not their delights  
 At home in leisure and domestic ease,  
 Exempt from many a care and chance to which  
 920 Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.  
 I to the Lords will intercede, not doubting  
 Thir favourable ear, that I may fetch thee  
 From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide  
 With me, where my redoubl'd love and care  
 With nursing diligence, to me glad office,  
 May ever tend about thee to old age  
 With all things grateful chear'd, and so suppli'd,  
 That what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt miss.  
*Sam.* No, no, of my condition take no care;  
 930 It fits not; thou and I long since are twain;  
 Nor think me so unwary or accurst  
 To bring my feet again into the snare  
 Where once I have been caught; I know thy trains  
 Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toys;  
 Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms  
 No more on me have power, their force is null'd,  
 So much of Adders wisdom I have learn't  
 To fence my ear against thy forceries.  
 If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men  
 940 Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone couldst hate me  
 Thy Husband, slight me, sell me, and forgo me;  
 How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby  
 Deceiveable, in most things as a child  
 Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,  
 And last neglected? How wouldst thou insult  
 When I must live uxorious to thy will

In



In perfect thralldom, how again betray me,  
Bearing my words and doings to the Lords  
To gloss upon, and censuring, frown or smile?

950 This Gaol I count the house of Liberty  
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.

*Dal.* Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

*Sam.* Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance  
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint. (wake

At distance I forgive thee, go with that;  
Bewail thy fallhood, and the pious works  
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable  
Among illustrious women, faithful wives:

Cherish thy hast'n'd widowhood with the gold  
960 Of Matrimonial treason: so farewell.

*Dal.* I see thou art implacable, more deaf  
To prayers than winds and seas, yet winds to seas  
Are reconcil'd at length, and Sea to Shore:  
Thy anger unappeasable, still rages,  
Eternal tempest never to be calm'd.  
Why do I humble thus my self, and suing  
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate?  
Bid go with evil omen and the brand  
Of infamy upon my name denounc't?

970 To mix with thy concernments I desist  
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.  
Fame if not double-fac't is double-mouth'd,  
And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds,  
On both his wings, one black, th' other white,  
Bears greatest names in his wild aerie flight.  
My name perhaps among the Circumcis'd  
In *Dan*, in *Judah*, and the bordering Tribes,  
To all posterity may stand defam'd,  
With malediction mention'd, and the blot

Of

980 Of fallhood most unconjugal traduc't.  
But in my countrey where I most desire,  
In *Ecron*, *Gaza*, *Asdod*, and in *Garb*  
I shall be nam'd among the famousst  
Of Women, sung at solemn festivals,  
Living and dead recorded, who to save  
Her countrey from a fierce destroyer, chose  
Above the faith of wedlock-bands, my tomb  
With odours visited and annual flowers.  
Not less renown'd than in Mount *Ephraim*,

990 *Jael*, who with inhospitable guile  
Smote *Sisera* sleeping through the Temples nail'd.  
Nor shall I count it hainous to enjoy  
The public marks of honour and reward  
Confer'd upon me, for the piety  
Which to my countrey I was judg'd to have shewn.  
At this who ever envies or repines  
I leave him to his lot, and like my own.

*Chor.* She's gone, a manifest Serpent by her sting  
Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.

1000 *Sam.* So let her go, God sent her to debase me,  
And aggravate my folly, who committed  
To such a viper his most sacred trust  
Of secrecie, my safety, and my life.

*Chor.* Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange  
After offence returning, to regain (power,  
Love once possess'd, nor can be easily  
Repuls't, without much inward passion felt  
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

*Sam.* Love quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,  
20 Not wedlock-treachery endangering life.

*Cho.* It is not vertue, wisdom, valour, wit,  
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit

That



That womans love can win or long inherit;  
 But what it is, hard is to say,  
 Harder to hit,  
 (Which way soever men refer it)  
 Much like thy riddle, *Samson*, in one day  
 Or seven, though one should musing sit;  
 If any of these or all, the *Timnian* bride  
 30 Had not so soon prefer'd  
 Thy Paranymp, worthless to thee compar'd,  
 Successour in thy bed,  
 Nor both so loosely disally'd  
 Thir nuptials, nor this last so treacherously  
 Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.  
 Is it for that such outward ornament  
 Was lavish't on their Sex, that inward gifts  
 Were left for haste unfinish't, judgment scant,  
 Capacity not rais'd to apprehend  
 40 Or value what is best  
 In choice, but ofttest to affect the wrong?  
 Or was too much of self-love mixt,  
 Of constancy no root infixt,  
 That either they love nothing, or not long?  
 What e're it be, to wisest men and best  
 Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,  
 Soft, modest, meek, demure,  
 Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a thorn  
 Intellin, far within defensive arms  
 50 A cleaving mischief, in his way to vertue  
 Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms  
 Draws him awry enslav'd  
 With dotage, and his sense deprav'd  
 To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends  
 What Pilot so expert but needs must wreck

Em-

Embarqu'd with such a Steers-mate at the Helm?  
 Favour'd of heav'n who finds  
 One vertuous rarely found,  
 That in domestic good combines:  
 60 Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:  
 But vertue which breaks through all opposition,  
 And all temptation can remove,  
 Most shines and most is acceptable above.  
 Therefore Gods universal Law  
 Gave to the man despotic power  
 Over his female in due awe,  
 Nor from that right to part an hour,  
 Smile she or lowre:  
 So shall he least confusion draw  
 70 On his whole life, not sway'd  
 By female usurpation, or dismay'd.  
 But had we best retire, I see a storm?  
*Sam.* Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.  
*Chor.* But this another kind of tempest brings.  
*Sam.* Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.  
*Chor.* Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear  
 The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue  
 Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,  
 The Giant *Harapha* of *Gath*, his look  
 80 Haughty as is his pile high-built and proud.  
 Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither  
 I less conjecture than when first I saw  
 The sumptuous *Dalila* floating this way:  
 His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.  
*Sam.* Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.  
*Cho.* His fraught wee soon shall know, he now arrives.  
*Har.* I come not *Samson*, to condole thy chance,  
 As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,  
 Though



Though for no friendly intent. I am of *Gath*,  
 90 Men call me *Harappa*, of stock renown'd  
 As *Og* or *Anak* and the *Emims* old  
 That *Kariat haim* held, thou knowst me now  
 If thou at all art known. Much I have heard  
 Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd  
 Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,  
 That I was never present on the place  
 Of those encounters, where we might have tri'd  
 Each others force in camp or list'd field:  
 And now am come to see of whom such noise  
 100 Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,  
 If thy appearance answer loud report.

*Sam.* The way to know were not to see but taste,

*Har.* Dost thou already single me? I thought  
 Gives and the Mill had tam'd thee. O that fortune  
 Had brought me to the field where thou art fam'd  
 To have wrought such wonders with an Asses Jaw;  
 I should have forc'd thee soon with other arms,  
 Or left thy carcass where the Ass lay thrown:  
 So had the glory of Prowess been recover'd

110 To *Palestine*, won by a *Philistine*  
 From the unforeskinn'd race, of whom thou bear'st  
 The highest name for valiant Acts, that honour  
 Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,  
 I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out. (but do

*Sam.* Boast not of what thou wouldst have done,  
 What then thou would'st, thou seest it in thy hand.

*Har.* To combat with a blind man I disdain,  
 And thou hast need much washing to be toucht.

*Sam.* Such usage as your honourable Lords  
 120 Afford me assassinated and betray'd,  
 Who durst not with thir whole united powers

In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,  
 Nor in the house with chamber Ambushes  
 Close-banded durst attaque me, no not sleeping,  
 Till they had r'd a woman with their gold  
 Breaking her Marraige Faith to circumvent me.  
 Therefore without feign'd shifts let be assign'd.  
 Some narrow place enclos'd, where sight may give thee,  
 Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;  
 130 Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy Helmet  
 And Brigandine of brass, thy broad Habergeon,  
 Vant-brass and Greves, and Gauntlet, and thy Spear  
 A Weavers beam, and seven-times-folded shield,  
 I only with an Oak'n staff will meet thee,  
 And raise such out-cries on thy clatter'd Iron,  
 Which long shall not with-hold me from thy head,  
 That in a little time while breath remains thee,  
 Thou oft shall wish thy self at *Gath* to boast  
 Again in safety what thou wouldst have done  
 140 To *Samson*, but shall never see *Gath* more.

*Har.* Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms  
 Which greatest Heroes have in battel worn,  
 Thir ornament and safety, had not spells  
 And black enchantments, some Magicians Art  
 Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from  
 Heaven

Feign'dst at thy birth was giv'n thee in thy hair,  
 Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs  
 Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back  
 Of chaf't wild Boars, or ruff'd Porcupines.

150 *Sam.* I know no Spells, use no forbidden Arts;  
 My trust is in the living God who gave me  
 At my Nativity this strength, diffus'd  
 No less through all my sinews, joints and bones,

H

Then



Then thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,  
The pledge of my unviolated vow.

For proof hereof, if *Dagon* be thy god,  
Go to his Temple, invoke his aid  
With solemnest devotion, spread before him  
How highly it concerns his glory now

To frustrate and dissolve these Magic spells,  
160 Which I to be the power of *Israel's* God

Avow, and challenge *Dagon* to the test,  
Offering to combat thee his Champion bold,  
With th' utmost of his Godhead seconded:

Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow  
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

*Har.* Presume not on thy God, what e're he be,  
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off  
Quite from his people, and delivered up

170 Into thy Enemies hand, permitted them

To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee  
Into the common Prison, there to grind

Among the Slaves and Asses thy comrades,  
As good for nothing else, no better service

With those thy boyst'rous locks, no worthy match  
For valour to assail, nor by the sword

Of noble Warriour, so to stain his honour,  
But by the Barbers razor best subdu'd.

*Sam.* All these indignities, for such they are  
180 From thine, these evils I deserve and more,

Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me

Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon

Whose ear is ever open; and his eye

Gracious to re-admit the suppliant;

In confidence whereof I once again

Defie thee to the trial of mortal fight,

By

By combat to decide whose god is God,  
Thine or whom I with *Israel's* Sons adore.

*Har.* Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting  
190 He will accept thee to defend his cause,

A Murtherer, a Revolter, and a Robber. (me these?)

*Sam.* Tongue-doughtie Giant, how dost thou prove

*Har.* Is not thy Nation subject to our Lords?

Thir Magistrates confest it, when they took thee

As a League-breaker and deliver'd bound

Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed

Notorious murder on those thirty men

At *Askalon*, who never did thee harm,

Then like a Robber stripdst them of their robes?

200 The *Philistines*, when thou hadst broke the league,

Went up with armed powers thee only seeking,

To others did no violence nor spoil.

*Sam.* Among the Daughters of the *Philistines*

I chose a Wife, which argu'd me no foe;

And in your City held my Nuptial Feast:

But your ill-meaning Politician Lords,

Under pretence of Bridal friends and guests,

Appointed to await me thirty spies,

Who threatning cruel death constrain'd the bride

210 To wring from me and tell to them my secret,

That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd.

When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,

As on my enemies, where ever chanc'd,

I us'd hostility, and took thir spoil

To pay my underminers in thir coin.

My Nation was subjected to your Lords.

It was the force of Conquest; force with force

Is well ejected when the Conquer'd can.

But I a private person, whom my Countrey

H 2

As



220 As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd  
Single Rebellion and did hostile Acts.  
I was no private but a person rais'd  
With strength sufficient and command from heav'n  
To free my Countrey; if their servile minds  
Me thir deliverer sent would not receive,  
But to thir Masters gave me up for nought,  
Th' unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.  
I wasto do my part from Heav'n assign'd,  
And had perform'd it if my known offence  
230 Had not disabl'd me, not all your force:  
These shifts refused, answer thy appellant  
Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts,  
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,  
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

*Har.* With thee a Man condemn'd, a Slave enrol'd,  
Due by the Law to capital punishment?  
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

*Sam.* Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,  
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?  
240 Come nearer, part not hence so slight inform'd;  
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

*Har.* O *Baal-zebub*! can my ears unus'd  
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

*Sam.* No man with-holds thee, nothing from thy  
Fear incurable; bring up thy van, (hand  
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.

*Har.* This insolence other kind of answer fits.

*Sam.* Go baffl'd coward, lest I run upon thee,  
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,  
250 And with one buffet lay thy structure low,  
Or swing thee in the Air, then dash thee down  
To the hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

*Har.*

*Har.* By *Ashtaroth* e're long thou shalt lament  
These braveries in Irons loaden on thee.

*Chor.* His Giantship is gone somewhat crest-fall'n,  
Stalking with less unconsci'nable strides,  
And lower looks, but in a sultrier chafe.

*Sam.* I dread him not, nor all his Giant-brood,  
Though fame divulg'd him Father of five Sons  
260 All of Gigantic size, *Goliath* chief.

*Chor.* He will directly to the Lords, I fear,  
And with malicious counsel stir them up  
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

*Sam.* He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight  
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise  
Whether he durst accept the offer or not,  
And that he durst not plain enough appear'd,  
Much more affliction then already felt  
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;  
270 If they intend advantage of my labours  
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping  
With no small profit daily to my owners.  
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove  
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence,  
The worst that he can give, to me the best.  
Yet so it may fall out, because thir end  
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine  
Draw thir own ruin who attempt the deed.

*Chor.* Oh how comely it is and how reviving  
280 To the Spirits of just men long oppress'd!  
When God into the hands of thir deliverer  
Puts invincible might  
To quell the mighty of the Earth, th' oppressour,  
The brute and boist'rous force of violent men  
Hardy and industrious to support

H 3

Tyrannic



Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue  
 The righteous and all such as honour Truth;  
 He all thir Ammunition  
 And feats of War defeats  
 290 With plain Heroic magnitude of mind  
 And celestial vigour arm'd,  
 Thir Armories and Magazines contemns,  
 Renders them useles, while  
 With winged expedition  
 Swift as the lightning glance he executes  
 His errand on the wicked, who surpris'd  
 Lose thir defence distracted and amaz'd.  
 But patience is more oft the exercise  
 Of Saints, the trial of thir fortitude,  
 300 Making them each his own Deliverer,  
 And Victor over all  
 That tyrannie or fortune can inflict,  
 Either of these is in thy lot,  
*Samson*, with might endu'd  
 Above the Sons of men; but sight bereav'd  
 May chance to number thee with those  
 Whom Patience finally must crown.  
 This Idols day hath bin to thee no day of rest,  
 Labouring thy mind  
 310 More then the working day thy hands,  
 And yet perhaps more trouble is behind.  
 For I descry this way  
 Some other tending, in his hand  
 A Scepter or quaint staff he bears,  
 Comes on amain, speed in his look.  
 By his habit I discern him now  
 A Public Officer, and now at hand,  
 His message will be short and voluble.

Off.

Off. *Ebrews*, the Pris'ner *Samson* here I seek.  
 320 Chor. His manacles remark him, there he sits.  
 Off. *Samson*, to thee our Lords thus bid me say;  
 This day to *Dagon* is a solemn Feast,  
 With Sacrifices, Triumph, Pomp, and Games;  
 Thy strength they know surpassing human race,  
 And now some public proof thereof require  
 To honour this great Feast, and great Assembly;  
 Rise therefore with all speed and come along,  
 Where I will see thee heartn'd and fresh clad  
 To appear as fits before th' illustrious Lords.  
 330 Sam. Thou knowst I am an *Ebrew*, therefore tell  
 Our Law forbids at thir Religious Rites (them,  
 My presence; for that cause I cannot come.  
 Off. This answer, be assur'd, will not content them.  
 Sam. Have they not sword-players, and ev'ry sort  
 Of Gymnic Artists, Wrestlers, Riders, Runners,  
 Juglers and Dancers, Antics, Mummers, Mimirs,  
 But they must pick me out with shackles tir'd,  
 And over-labour'd at thir publick Mill,  
 To make them sport with blind activity?  
 340 Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels  
 On my refusal to distress me more,  
 Or make a game of my calamities?  
 Return the way thou cam'st, I will not come.  
 Off. Regard thy self, this will offend them highly.  
 Sam. My self? my conscience and internal peace.  
 Can they think me so broken, so debas'd  
 With corporal servitude, that my mind ever  
 Will condescend to such absurd commands?  
 Although thir drudge, to be thir fool or jester,  
 350 And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief  
 To shew them feats, and play before thir god,

H 4

The



The worst of all indignities, yet on me  
Joyn'd with extream contempt? I will not come.

Off. My message was impos'd on me with speed,  
Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution?

Sam. So take it with what speed thy message needs.

Off. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

Sa. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

Chor. Consider, *Samson*; matters now are strain'd  
360 Up to the highth, whether to hold or break;

He's gone, and who knows how he may report

Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?

Expect another message more imperious,

More Lordly thund'ring than thou well wilt bear.

Sam. Shall I abuse this Consecrated gift  
Of strength, again returning with my hair

After my great transgression, so requite

Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin

By prostituting holy things to Idols;

370 A *Nazarite* in place abominable

Vaunting my strength in honour to thir *Dagon*?

Besides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,

What act more execrably unclean, prophane?

Chor. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the *Phili-*  
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean. (stines,

Sam. Not in thir Idol-worship, but by labour

Honest and lawful to deserve my food  
Of those who have me in thir civil power. (not.

Chor. Where the heart joyns not, outward acts defile

380 Sam. Where outward force constraines, the sentence  
But who constrains me to the Temple of *Dagon*, (holds  
Not dragging? the *Philistian* Lords command.

Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,  
I do it freely, venturing to displease

God

God for the fear of Man, and Man prefer,

Set God behind: which in his jealousy

Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness,

Yet that he may dispense with me or thee

Present in Temples at Idolatrous Rites

390 For some important cause, thou needst not doubt.

Chor. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my

Sam. Be of good courage, I begin to feel (reach,

Some rousing motions in me which dispose

To something extraordinary my thoughts.

I with this Messenger will go along,

Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour

Our Law, or stain my vow of *Nazarite*,

If there be ought of presage in the mind,

This day will be remarkable in my life

400 By some great act, or of my days the last.

Chor. In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns.

Off. *Samson*, this second message from our Lords

To thee I am bid say. Art thou our Slave,

Our Captive, at the public Mill our drudge,

And dar'st thou at our sending and command

Dispute thy coming? come without delay;

Or we shall find such Engines to assail

And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,

Though thou art firmlier fastn'd then a rock.

410 Sam. I could be well content to try thir Art,  
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious.

Yet knowing thir advantages too many,

Because they shall not trail me through thir streets

Like a wild Beast, I am content to go.

Masters commands come with a power resistless

To such as owe them absolute subjection;

And for a life who will not change his purpose?

(So



(So mutable are all the ways of men)

Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply

420 Scandalous or forbidden in our Law.

Off. I praise thy resolution, doff these links:

By this compliance thou wilt win the Lords

To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

Sam. Brethren farewell, your company along

I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them

To see me girt with Friends; and how the sight

Of me as of a common Enemy,

So dreaded once, may now exasperate them

I know not: Lords are Lordliest in thir wine;

430 And the well-feasted Priest then soonest fir'd

With zeal, if aught Religion seem concern'd:

No less the people on thir Holy-days

Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable;

Happ'n what may, of me expect to hear

Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy

Our God, our Law, my Nation, or my self,

The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

Chor. Go, and the Holy One

Of Israel be thy guide

440 To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name

Great among the Heathen round:

Send the Angel of thy Birth to stand

Fast by the side, who from thy Fathers field

Rode up in flames after his message told

Of thy conception, and be now a shield

Of fire; that Spirit that first rusht on thee

In the Camp of Dan

Be efficacious in thee now at need.

For never was from Heaven imparted

450 Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,

As

As in thy wond'rous actions hath been seen.

But wherefore comes old Manoa in such haste

With youthful steps? much livelier then e're while

He seems: supposing here to find his Son,

Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

Man. Peace with you brethren; my inducement

Was not at present here to find my Son, (hither

By order of the Lords new parted hence

To come and play before them at thir Feast.

460 I heard all as I came, the City rings

And numbers thither flock, I had no will,

Lest I should see him forc't to things unseemly.

But that which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly

To give ye part with me what hope I have

With good success to work his liberty.

Chor. That hope would much rejoyce us to partake

With thee; say reverend Sire, We thirst to hear.

Man. I have attempted one by one the Lords

Either at home, or through the high street passing,

470 With supplication prone and Fathers tears

To accept of ranfome for my Son thir pris'oner,

Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,

Contemtuious, proud, set on revenge and spite;

That part most reverenc'd Dagon and his priests,

Others more moderate seeming, but thir aim

Private reward, for which both God and State

They easily would set to sale, a third

More generous far and civil, who confess'd

They had anough reveng'd, having reduc't

480 Thir foe to misery beneath thir fears,

The rest was magnanimity to remit,

If some convenient ransom were propos'd.

What noise or shout was that? it tore the Skie.

Chor.



*Chor.* Doubtless the people shouting to behold  
Thir once great dread, captive, and blind before them,  
Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

*Man.* His ransom, if my whole inheritance  
May compass it, shall willingly be paid  
And numberd down: much rather I shall chuse  
490 To live the poorest in my Tribe, then richest,  
And he in that calamitous prison left.  
No, I am fixt not to part hence without him.  
For his redemption all my Patrimony,  
If need be, I am ready to forgo  
And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

*Chor.* Fathers are wont to lay up for thir Sons,  
Thou for thy Son art bent to lay out all;  
Sons wont to nurse thir Parents in old age,  
Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy Son  
500 Made older then thy age through eye-sight lost.

*Man.* It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,  
And view him sitting in the house, enobl'd  
With all those high exploits by him achiev'd,  
And on his shoulders waving down those locks,  
That of a Nation arm'd the strength contain'd:  
And I perswade me God hath not permitted  
His strength again to grow up with his hair  
Garrison'd round about him like a Camp  
Of faithful Souldiery, were not his purpose  
510 To use him further yet in some great service,  
Not to sit idle with so great a gift  
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.

And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,  
God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

*Chor.* Thy hopes are not ill founded nor seem vain  
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon

Conceiv'd,

Conceiv'd, agreeable to a Fathers love,  
In both which we, as next participate.

*Man.* I know your friendly minds and—O what  
520 Mercy of heav'n what hideous noise was that! (noise!)  
Horribly loud unlike the former shout.

*Chor.* Noise call you it or universal groan  
As if the whole inhabitation perish'd,  
Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,  
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

*Man.* Of ruin indeed me thought I heard the noise,  
Oh it continues, they have slain my Son.

*Chor.* Thy Son is rather slaying them, that outcry  
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

530 *Man.* Some dismal accident it needs must be;  
What shall we do, stay here or run and see?

*Chor.* Best keep together here, lest running thither  
We unawares run into dangers mouth.

This evil on the *Philistines* is fall'n,  
From whom could else a general cry be heard?

The sufferers then will scarce molest us here,  
From other hands we need not much to fear.

What if his eye-sight (for to *Israels* God  
Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,

540 He now be dealing dole among his foes,  
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way?

*Man.* That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

*Chor.* Yet God hath wrought things as incredible  
For his people of old; what hinders now?

*Man.* He can I know, but doubt to think he will;  
Yet Hope would fain subscribe, and tempts Belief.

A little stay will bring some notice hither.

*Chor.* Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;  
For evil news rides post, while good news baits.

And



350 And to our wish I see one hither speeding,  
An *Ebrew*, as I guess, and of our Tribe.

*Mess.* O whither shall I run, or which way flie  
The sight of this so horrid spectacle  
Which earst my eyes beheld and yet behold;  
For dire imagination still pursues me.

But providence or instinct of nature seems,  
Or reason though disturb'd, and scarce consulted  
To have guided me aright, I know not how,  
To the first reverend *Manoa*, and to these

360 My Countrey-men, whom here I knew remaining,  
As at some distance from the place of horror,  
So in the sad event too much concern'd.

*Man.* The accident was loud, and heard before thee  
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not,  
No Preface needs, thou seest we long to know.

*Mess.* It would burst forth, but I recover breath  
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

*Man.* Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.

*Mess.* *Gaza* yet stands, but all her Sons are fall'n,  
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.

370 *Man.* Sad, but thou knowst to *Israelites* not saddest  
The desolation of a Hostile City.

*Mess.* Feed on that first, there may in grief be surfeit.

*Man.* Relate by whom. *Mess.* By *Samson*.

(*Man.* That still lessens

The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

*Mess.* Ah *Manoa* I refrain, too suddenly  
To utter what will come at last too soon;  
Lest evil tidings with too rude irruption

Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

380 *Man.* Suspense in news is torture, speak them out.

*Mess.* Then take the worst in brief, *Samson* is dead.

*Man.*

*Man.* The worst indeed, O all my hope's defeated  
To free him hence! but death who sets all free  
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.  
What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd  
Hopeful of his Delivery, which now proves  
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring  
Nipt with the lagging rear of winters frost.  
Yet e're I give the reins to grief, say first,  
How di'd he? death to life is crown or shame.  
390 All by him fell thou say'st, by whom fell he,  
What glorious hand gave *Samson* his death's wound?

*Mess.* Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

*Man.* Wearied with slaughter then or how? explain.

*Mess.* By his own hands.

*Man.* Self-violence? what cause

Brought him so soon at variance with himself

Among his foes? *Mess.* Inevitable cause

At once both to destroy and be destroy'd;

The Edifice where all were met to see him

400 Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.

*Man.* O lastly over strong against thy self!

A dreadfull way thou took'st to thy revenge.

More then enough we know; but while things yet

Are in confusion, give us if thou canst,

Eye-witness of what first or last was done,

Relation more particular and distinct.

*Mess.* Occasions drew me early to this City,

And as the gates I enter'd with Sun-rise,

The morning Trumpets Festival proclaim'd.

410 Through each high street: little I had dispatch't

When all abroad was rumour'd that this day

*Samson* should be brought forth to shew the people

Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;



I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded  
 Not to be absent at that spectacle.  
 The building was a specious Theatre  
 Half-round on two main Pillars vaulted high,  
 With seats where all the Lords and each degree  
 Of sort, might set in order to behold,  
 620 The other side was op'n, where the throng  
 On banks and scaffolds under Skie might stand;  
 I among these aloof obscurely stood.  
 The Feast and noon grew high, and Sacrifice  
 Had fill'd thir hearts with mirth, high chear, and wine,  
 When to thir sports they turn'd. Immediately  
 Was *Samson* as a public servant brought,  
 In thir state Livery clad; before him Pipes  
 And Timbrels, on each side went armed guards,  
 Both horse and foot before him and behind  
 630 Archers, and Slingers, Cataphracts and Spears.  
 At sight of him the people with a shout  
 Ristled the Air clamouring thir god with praise,  
 Who had made thir dreadful enemy thir thrall.  
 He patient but undaunted where they led him,  
 Came to the place, and what was set before him  
 Which without help of eye might be assay'd,  
 To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd  
 All with incredible, stupendious force,  
 None daring to appear Antagonist.  
 640 At length for intermission sake they led him  
 Between the pillars; he his guide requested  
 (For so from such as nearer stood we heard)  
 As over-tir'd to let him lean a while  
 With both his arms on those two massie Pillars  
 That to the arched roof gave main support.  
 He unsuspecting led him; which when *Samson*

Felt

Felt in his arms, with head a while enclin'd,  
 And eyes fast fixt he stood, as one who pray'd,  
 Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd.  
 At last with head erect thus cryed aloud,  
 650 Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd  
 I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,  
 Nor without wonder or delight beheld.  
 Now of my own accord such other tryal  
 I mean to shew you of my strength, yet greater;  
 As with amaze shall strike all who behold.  
 This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd,  
 As with the force of winds and waters pent,  
 When Mountains tremble, those two massie Pillars  
 660 With horrible convulsion to and fro,  
 He tugg'd, he took, till down they came and drew  
 The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder  
 Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,  
 Lords, Ladies, Captains, Councillors, or Priests,  
 Thir choice nobility and flower, not only  
 Of this but each *Philistian* City round  
 Met from all parts to solemnize this Feast.  
*Samson* with these immixt, inevitably  
 Pull'd down the same destruction on himself:  
 670 The vulgar only scap'd who stood without.  
 Chor. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!  
 Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd  
 The work for which thou wast foretold  
 To *Israel*, and now ly'st victorious  
 Among thy slain self-kill'd  
 Not willingly, but tangl'd in the fold,  
 Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd  
 Thee with thy slaughter'd foes in number more  
 Than all thy life had slain before.

I

Semi-



680 *Semichor.* While thir hearts were jocund & sublime,  
 Drunk with Idolatry, drunk with Wine,  
 And fat regorg'd of Bulls and Goats,  
 Chaunting thir Idol, and preferring  
 Before our living Dread who dwells  
 In *Silo* his bright Sanctuary:  
 Among them he a spirit of phrenzie sent,  
 Who hurt thir minds,  
 And urg'd them on with mad desire  
 To call in hast for thir destroyer;  
 690 They only set on sport and play  
 Unweetingly importun'd  
 Thir own destruction to come speedy upon them.  
 So fondere mortal men  
 Fall'n into wrath divine,  
 As thir own ruin on themselves to invite,  
 Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,  
 And with blindness internal struck.

*Semichor.* But he though blind of sight,  
 Despis'd and thought extinguish't quite,  
 700 With inward eyes illuminated  
 His fierie vertue rouz'd  
 From under ashes into sudden flame,  
 And as an ev'ning Dragon came,  
 Assailant on the perched roosts,  
 And nests in order rang'd  
 Of tame villatic Fowle; but as an Eagle  
 His cloudless thunder bolted on thir heads.  
 So vertue giv'n for lost,  
 Deprest, and overthrown, as seem'd,  
 710 Like that self-begott'n bird  
 In the *Arabian* woods embost,  
 That no second knows nor third,

And

And lay e're while a Holocaust,  
 From out her ashie womb now teem'd,  
 Revives, reffourishes, then vigorous most  
 When most unactive deem'd,  
 And though her body die, her fame survives,  
 A secular bird ages of lives.

*Man.* Come, come, no time for lamentation now,  
 720 Nor much more cause, *Samson* hath quit himself  
 Like *Samson*, and heroicly hath finish'd  
 A life Heroic, on his Enemies  
 Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,  
 And lamentation to the Sons of *Chaptor*  
 Through all *Philistian* bounds. To *Israel*  
 Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them  
 Find courage to lay hold on this occasion,  
 To himself and Fathers house eternal fame;  
 And which is best and happiest yet, all this  
 730 With God not parted from him, as was feard,  
 But favouring and assisting to the end.  
 Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
 Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,  
 Dispraise, or blame, nothing but well and fair,  
 And what may quiet us in a death so noble.  
 Let us go find the body where it lies  
 Sok't in his enemies blood, and from the stream  
 With lavers pure and cleansing herbs wash off  
 The clotted gore. I with what speed thee while  
 740 (*Gaza* is not in plight to say us nay)  
 Will send for all my kindred, all my friends  
 To fetch him hence and solemnly attend  
 With silent obsequie and funeral train  
 Home to his Fathers house: there will I build him  
 A Monument, and plant it round with shade



Of Laurel ever green, and branching Palm,  
 With all his Trophies hung, and Acts enroll'd  
 In copious Legend, or sweet Lyric Song.  
 Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,  
 750 And from his memory inflame thir breasts  
 To matchless valour, and adventures high :  
 The Virgins also shall on feastfull days  
 Visit his Tomb with flowers, only bewailing  
 His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,  
 From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

*Chor.* All is best, though we oft doubt,  
 What th' unsearchable dispose  
 Of highest wisdom brings about,  
 And ever best found in the close.  
 760 Oft he seems to hide his face,  
 But unexpectedly returns  
 And to his faithful Champion hath in place  
 Bore witness gloriously ; whence *Gaza* mourns  
 And all that band them to resist  
 His uncontroulable intent,  
 His servants he with new acquit  
 Of true experience from this great event  
 With peace and consolation hath dismiss'd,  
 And calm of mind all passion spent.

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*THE END.*











